THE WASHINGTON THEME by Allan Nevins

The Saturday Review of Literature

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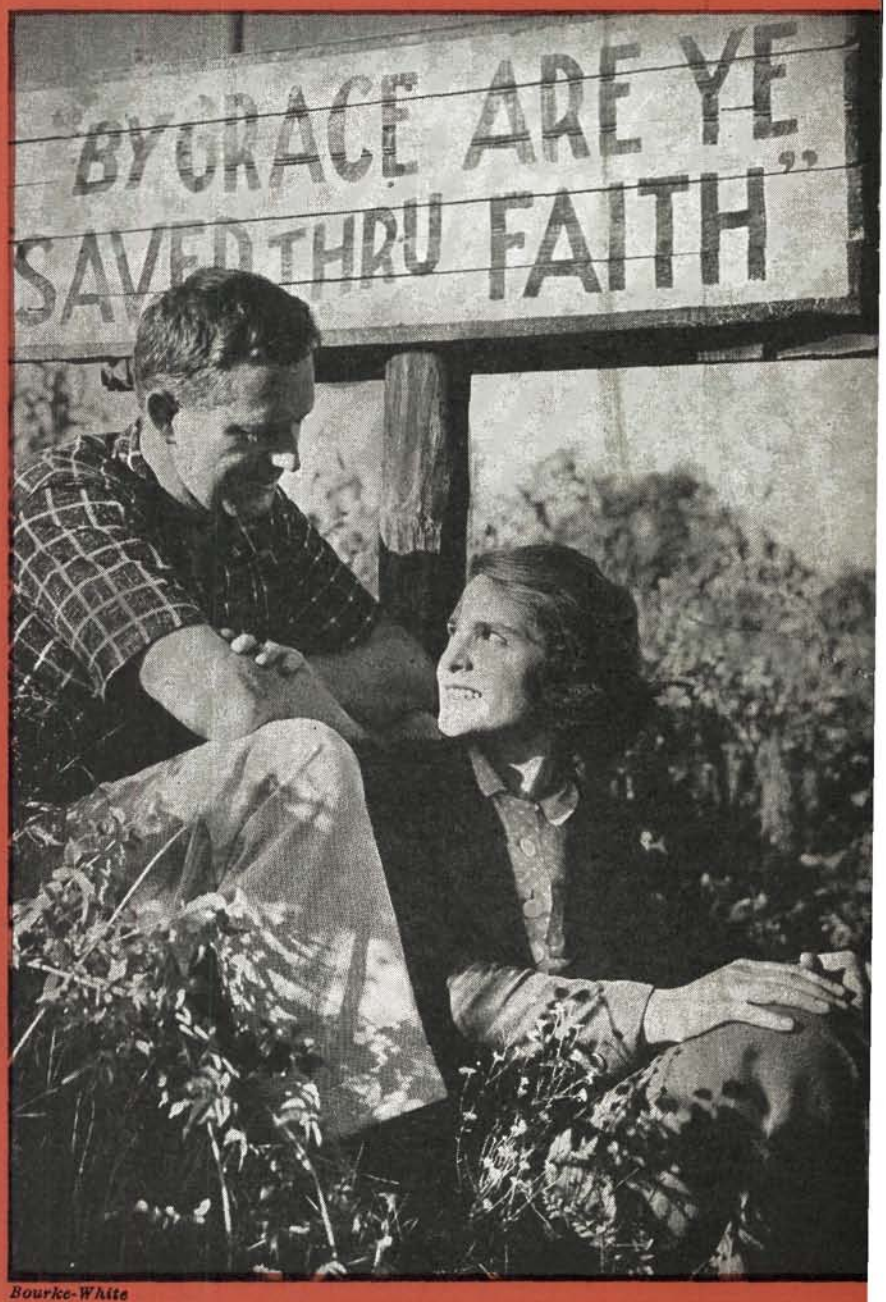

Bourke-White

ERSKINE CALDWELL AND MARGARET BOURKE-WHITE: "Mr. Caldwell's standards are the standards of perfection" . . . ***(See page 5)***

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Pater Patriae: the Washington Theme

BY ALLAN NEVINS

The Virginia Colonel—portrait by Peale. (Illustrations on pages 3 and 4 from "The Autobiography of George Washington," edited by Edward C. Boykin.)

THE hall of American history is lined with monumental busts and full-length figures executed with strange variegations of taste and wide gradations of merit and demerit. Their total effect is not much more pleasing or impressive than that of the Hall of Statuary in Washington. Here and there a great personage has been dealt with in a fashion which at once satisfies the fastidious scholar and gratifies the lover of literature. New representations of Lincoln, of Robert E. Lee, of John Marshall, and of Benjamin Franklin will no doubt be brought forward; but those we now have may be called worthy of their subjects. Arresting figures like Andrew Jackson and Theodore Roosevelt have been bodied forth with vitality and power. But there are sad and disturbing gaps. Particularly is this so with what was once regarded as the most heroic period of American history. Hamilton and Jefferson remain to be re-created in a way which will make them seem breathing, active men, starting out of a vivid background. And at the head of the hall the niche reserved for perhaps the greatest figure of all, and certainly the grandest, the Father of his Country, is yet to be properly filled.

Washington is properly a subject for both the biographer and the historian, and will have to be treated continuously by both. Of books about him and his period there has not been and never will be an end. It is true that the time and the man both present peculiar difficulties. That part of our historical hall lies in the eighteenth century, its conventions, ideas, hopes, and apprehensions far removed from those of the world of 1940; the writer who would grapple with Washington and his era has first to understand a long-vanished environment, and then to make his reader understand it. A combination of the tastes and industry of the antiquarian, and the magic of the best historical scene-painter, is required. Yet that combination sometimes occurs. To a great extent it was offered nearly a century ago by Irving, whose five-volume Washington did almost as much for the theme as the materials and scholarly canons of the time permitted. Why has this particular gauntlet, this challenge to American writers, not in recent decades been vigorously caught up?

It must be said that historians have of late been far less keenly interested than they might be in those scenes of which Washington was the central figure. Whole shelffuls of books, to be sure, have been written on the period from 1750 to 1797. But in the various treatments of these crowded decades, emphasis has fallen upon certain aspects and events of history which touch Washington but indirectly. Our historians have become analysts. They have focussed their attention upon intricate problems: upon the causes of the Revolution, especially those economic in nature; the diplomatic history of the struggle; the nature of the final peace; State administration and social ferment in the period of the Confederation; and the process of Constitution-making. This has made for the writing of monographs rather than broad histories. Writers like Alvord, Beer, and Schlesinger have explored the factors which initiated the revolt of the colonies; men like Bemis, Corwin, and A. P. Whitaker have followed all the convolutions of diplomacy during and after the war; J. Franklin Jameson has sketched the social changes; and Beard and a host of others have studied in abstruse detail the formation of the Constitution.

All this leaves Washington off-stage, or at best on the margins of the drama. The military history of the Revolution, particularly after 1778 (and it reached its desperate crisis in 1780), has been very strikingly neglected. C. H. Van Tyne traced the Revolution as far as the French Alliance, while Allen French and Hoffman Nickerson have discussed the first year of conflict and the Saratoga campaign respectively. But the other phases of the struggle have been largely ignored. And how little attention recent historians have paid to the eight years of Washington's Administration as seen from Washington's point of view! These beginnings of Federal government have been surveyed from Jefferson's standpoint; from Hamilton's standpoint—but not from the President's. There lies a very glaring gap.

The biographers have not done much better than the historians. While they have been numerous, not one has been both comprehensive and thorough. For good commercial reasons, nearly all the recent lives of Washington have

Next Week

GOING NATIVE
By OLIVER ST. JOHN GOGARTY
Reviewed by R. Ellis Roberts

OSCAR WILDE AND THE YELLOW NINETIES
By FRANCES WINWAR
Reviewed by Ernest Boyd

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been one-volume works, and in such limited treatments nine-tenths of the space allotted to narrative must rehearse facts already well known. It is in new *interpretations* of a broad character that the writers of one- or two-volume works can best make their mark. Some of these are excellent. But they do not fill the great need; for of course Washington has always deserved an examination on the scale of Freeman's "Lee," Beveridge's "Marshall," and the Nicolay & Hay (or Sandburg) "Lincoln." It is astonishing that only one such effort at both a panoramic and detailed portraiture has been made, and that this has come to an apparent stop half-done. Mr. Rupert Hughes's volumes, the latest of which ten years ago reached 1781, have some conspicuous merits. They are critical in spirit, built on an immense amount of research, and imbued with genuine vitality. The work is well worth completing. At the same time, their merits do not extend to deep insight, a perfect command of manuscript and monographic sources, and stylistic power. Even if the series is finished, some bolder and more expert life on the grand scale, executed with more literary brilliance, will be desirable.

For this, one part of the necessary foundation-work has recently been laid. The Bicentennial Celebration directed with such gusto by Mr. Sol Bloom left as its heritage a quickened popular interest in Washington, some valuable pamphlets and brochures, and several useful short lives. But above all, it gave us the admirable edition of Washington's works now in progress under the editorship of John C. Fitzpatrick. More than two-thirds of the projected thirty-seven volumes now stand on library shelves. The two previous editions of the Writings edited by Jared Sparks and Worthington C. Ford contained in all between three thousand and four thousand letters and other documents. It is estimated that Washington actually wrote or signed not less than eight thousand and probably ten thousand letters and papers. As Mr. Fitzpatrick says, "Practically all the published biographies of Washington have been based upon this less than fifty per cent of his writings [in Sparks and Ford], and not upon research in his surviving manuscripts." The new collection, which will be as nearly definitive as present circumstances permit, should open a new era in the biographical treatment of the first President. But it and Mr. Fitzpatrick's four-volume edition of the Diaries do not stand alone. Of far-reaching importance for the whole period 1774-1789 are the eight volumes of the "Letters of Members of the Continental Congress," completed not long ago under the expert editorship of Edmund C. Burnett. Here for the first time we have adequate materials upon the work of the civil arm of the government in the years that Washington was directing the military arm.

"The military history of the Revolution . . . has been strikingly neglected" . . . (Washington and Lafayette at Valley Forge)

But this is only part of the needed foundation-work; and it may be questioned whether an equally essential section does not need to be put in place. At any rate, it is certain that an important group of books on the Revolutionary period still waits on Lethe to be born—a group that will undoubtedly offer new *aperçus* of fact, and open new avenues of thought, regarding Washington. These are books that are not primarily about Washington at all, but works that approach him by General Howe's favorite (and successful) maneuver, a flank attack. In all the literature of the time, Washington's immediate co-workers and opponents have been too completely shoved to one side. Events have been looked at through Washington's eyes alone, when in some instances they cryingly demand examination from many points of view; the view of rivals and allies, enemies and friends, detractors and eulogists. The old perfervid hero-worship of Washington, though partly outworn, survives at points in a curious assumption that in controversial matters his side of the controversy alone is worthy scrutiny. Some striking illustrations of this can easily be adduced.

The two most conspicuous Revolutionary generals, after Washington, were Horatio Gates and Nathanael Greene. When the war ended Gates was second in command, while Greene stood second in the honors he had won. How have these primary figures been handled by writers on the period? No biography of Greene has been published since his grandson, George Washington Greene, erected a three-volume monument of family piety in 1867-71, its temper uncritical and its basis inadequate. Many letters by and to Greene have been added since then to the original collection, the repository of which is the Clements Library. A modern life, embodying critical acumen and thorough research, is still to be issued. As for Gates, no biography of him whatever has been printed. His widow, a woman of some means, pathetically kept his papers together and bequeathed them to Joel Barlow for literary use. They have long been one of the famous collections in the New York Historical Society, but no one has published a life founded upon them. Or take another figure of importance touching Washington's career, George Mifflin; quartermaster-general, angry critic of the commander, and the man to whom as president of Congress in 1783 Washington returned his commission. Many of his papers exist—but no biography.

All three men (and several others who might be named, like Thomas Conway) have enigmatic aspects; their careers abounded in controversy, some of which touched Washington vitally; and a realistic scrutiny of their actions would throw a bright beam of light athwart Washington's course. Greene was one of Washington's favorites. He deservedly became

(*Continued on page* 14)

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Flight from Violence

TROUBLE IN JULY. By Erskine Caldwell. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce. 1940. 241 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by FRANK DANIEL

SUCH capacity as the citizens of Julie County, Georgia, have is a capacity for mischief and violence. A gentler disposition emerges inadvertently from inanition and gross incompetence, though Erskine Caldwell never implies that these qualities create good will. They permit its manifestation, while harshness and hate fill the body and the spirit. Of the wretched men of ill will whom Mr. Caldwell portrays in "Trouble in July," Shep Bartow is dominant. This tenant farmer is the quickest-tempered man in Julie County. Everybody remembered how his anger blazed out when he found his wife's body polluting the well water, a week after she had disappeared. Shep had to dig a new well. And such an influential man was naturally expected to lead a memorable man-hunt when his fifteen-year-old daughter, prompted by two local busybodies, said Sonny Clark, a Negro boy, had outraged her. Nobody had much regard for Katy, but the dull, hot Dog Days were upon Julie County, the cotton crop was laid by, and diversions were scarce.

Nevertheless, a lynching just then might effect the coming election, as Judge Ben Allen saw. His influence dominated the local government, and he ordered Sheriff Jeff McCurtain to keep the lynching politically clean. This might best be done if the sheriff went on a fishing trip until the trouble blew over.

But before Sheriff Jeff could go to Lord's Creek, on his enforced holiday, a band of masked men appeared at the jailhouse in Andrewjones, the county seat, to assure themselves that Sonny Clark wasn't being harbored there. He wasn't, but there was another Negro in one of the cells, so the masked men took him along as a substitute, in case they didn't catch Sonny Clark. Now this hostage was a little "Geechee nigger" named Sam, and Sheriff Jeff locked him up periodically with the friendliest feeling in the world. Consequently when the mob seized Sam, the sheriff couldn't worry about Sonny Clark, or about Judge Ben Allen's orders, though disobedience meant the end of the sheriff's political career. He could think only about Sam.

Jeff weighed "in the neighborhood of three hundred pounds, although in winter he ate more and added fifteen or twenty pounds of seasonal weight." Heavy body and heavier mind were loathe to activity. But just the same Sheriff Jeff had to look for Sam, futilely and fumblingly, in all the swamps and woods and pigweed patches of Julie County, until he collapsed.

In Sheriff Jeff recurs Mr. Caldwell's familiar theme of blind loyalty. Jeeter was loyal to his spent acres, Ty Ty to his dream of striking gold on his farm, Will Thompson to the cotton mill where he worked. "Trouble in July" is Mr. Caldwell's reaffirmation of this involuntary, piteous, destructive movement towards fidelity. It exists in cloddish clowns who do not comprehend it, and once in a while it is an instinct stronger than life and well-being. Devoid of dignity, it is yet a quality which supersedes other instincts, reaching out toward selflessness and goodwill.

Mr. Caldwell's standards are the standards of perfection; he is goaded to demanding his ideal by reducing man's greed and malice to its lowest common denominator, though never to absurdity. His calculated indifference is almost a sullenness to conceal his cold fury, his bitter scorn, of human obloquy. He assumes indifference to decry an actual indifference in others to misery. In Georgia's stark backwoods, drained of life's mitigations, he finds the strange, dramatic symbol of a world bled of human kindness. Here he can shock us with unconcern and cruelty. But most forcefully he shocks us by revealing the tiny seed embedded in a crevice, exerting itself to life and brief being, and thereby riving the hard, malignant rock.

Tecumseh's Daughter

THE LOON FEATHER. By Iola Fuller. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1940. 419 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by RICHARD A. CORDELL

AS a prize-winning novel, this winner of the Hopwood Award has two distinctions that are all too rare: its excellence will convince the reader that it deserves an award, and the award itself is justified if it can bring to light such extraordinary talent as Iola Fuller possesses. "The Loon Feather" is a remarkable first novel, beautifully written, firm in outline, sure in direction. It is a semihistorical novel with Mackinac Island as its background and an invented daughter of Tecumseh as its protagonist.

Iola Fuller

The author is to be commended for her restraint, for her awareness of her limitations. Through careful research she is able to reconstruct convincingly for us Mackinac Island and its colorful life in the early 1800s when "the Turtle" was an important post of the American Fur Company. But she rejects all temptation to extend the boundaries of her novel, to try to give it sweep and wide historical significance. There is no juggling with ideas, no argument, no theory. She does not, for example, bring John Jacob Astor into the story directly, or pass judgment on him or his business ethics. Tecumseh appears briefly, but his adventures and death are merely reported. The "hero" of the novel is an army physician who succeeds the celebrated Dr. William Beaumont at Fort Mackinac, but the author indulges in no asides about Beaumont and his great discovery. Geographically "The Loon Feather" covers very little ground—a hasty glimpse at Quebec, a peep at Detroit, and the novelist scurries back to her familiar Island. Although her sympathies are definitely with the Indians and the narrative is consistently from their point of view, she is scrupulously fair. She treats the Indians neither as noble primitives nor as bloodthirsty savages, but as human beings harassed by problems not unlike our own today. She is equally judicious in handling the white characters, especially the thin-blooded, fastidious Pierre and his family-proud mother, both French aristocrats, but we come to understand and like them both.

The book has both beauty and strength; beauty because of the firm, clean prose, strength because of the quiet and the confident ease of the writing. The characters and the background are sharply cut, the pictures are clear and strong. The exquisite metaphors of the Indians give lift and loveliness to the pages, but they occur simply and naturally and never seem merely ornamental and literary. Miss Fisher has an Indian-like sensitivity to all weather phenomena and to the rhythm of the seasons. This rich and satisfying story of Tecumseh's daughter provides the Indian with one of the few dignified, unsensational, and honest treatments he has ever received in American literature.

Richard A. Cordell is a member of the English department at Purdue University.

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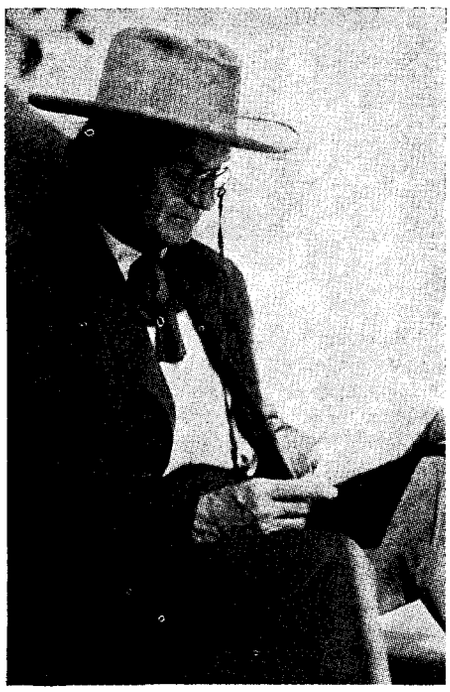
Fra Elbertus

ELBERT HUBBARD: Genius of Roycroft. By David Arnold Balch. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co. 1940. 320 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by FREDERICK LEWIS ALLEN

ELBERT HUBBARD is a fascinating character to study. At first glance he would seem to have been merely a rhetorical charlatan—a man with a gift of the gab who built himself a great reputation among the naïve as a literary man and a sage, chiefly by wearing his hair long, leading an ostentatiously homespun life at East Aurora, and talking about unworldly values while he grabbed every chance for worldly success. At second glance Hubbard appears in a guise somewhat more complex: as a successful business man (the inventor of the use of the premium in salesmanship) who renounced the commercial life, made an idealistic attempt to build at East Aurora a community based upon the socialistic principles of William Morris, and then was gradually seduced by his zeal for profits not only into becoming the autocrat of this community but also into becoming a highly-paid defender of Big Business.

When one looks at him still more closely, however, even this second picture of him is revealed as misleadingly simple. There was much that was genuine in Hubbard throughout: a genuine revulsion against the grimness of American religion and American industrialism, a genuine kindliness to others. There was also much that was bogus: a slippery tendency to appropriate credit for other people's work, a shoddiness of ethical quality which showed itself in numerous small prostitutions of his talent and reputation. Humanitarian and showman, reformer and extoller of the rich, commonplace writer and brilliant epigrammatist, he was a mass of contradictions, but always intensely alive: an electrically exciting person. The way in which his varied qualities shaped his career cannot be understood unless one understand the eighteen-nineties and nineteen-hundreds, so different from our own times; and it throws light in turn upon the social temper of that period.



Elbert Hubbard

Mr. Balch has gathered together the facts of Hubbard's life as they have not, to the best of my knowledge, been previously gathered. He has done a good job, it seems to me, of sifting fact from legend—a hard job, for Hubbard himself was a notoriously unreliable source of information upon his own past, and was surrounded by enthusiasts who believed everything he said and by enemies intent upon scandal-mongering. The first third of the biography is the least interesting part, for Hubbard's boyhood and early soap-selling years were not memorable, and in the effort to make them seem so, Mr. Balch has felt compelled to guess—as biographers confronted with uninspiring material so often do—what may have been the effect of this or that incident upon the growing boy, and thus to attempt to make much out of little. In this part of the book the author's style is often trite. But as soon as Mr. Balch reaches the point where Hubbard broke out of business into novel-writing and began to struggle toward a different sort of success, the story takes us straight into the puzzle of Hubbard's personality and becomes vital; the anecdotes become more revealing; and the biographer's style shows the tonic effect of having substantial material to deal with.

I do not feel that Mr. Balch quite solves the Hubbard puzzle. He puts the pieces on the table before us, as it were, without joining them in a coherent pattern. But at least he brings them into clear view. If he is perhaps over-kind to his subject, at least he is straightforward in his praise and attentive to fact. He usefully opens the way for those who may want to try their hand at the puzzle and would otherwise be baffled by the shakiness of much of the evidence hitherto available.

Frederick Lewis Allen's "Since Yesterday," reviewed last week, is a history of the 1930s *in America, a sequel to his previous book, "Only Yesterday," on the* 1920s.

No Royal Road

THE NEW WORLD ORDER. By H. G. Wells. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1940. 145 *pp.* $1.50.

Reviewed by JACQUES BARZUN

THOUGH the world be sick, the patriarchs of thought are going strong. Past eighty, Dewey and Whitehead still produce. Shaw's fiftieth play, "Geneva," has scarcely closed before Wells brings out another book—quite possibly his one hundred and fiftieth. We should be more grateful than we are for this grandfatherly solicitude, which the world's infantile behavior does not deserve. This is not irony: in reading "The New World Order" one is as much touched by the sustained warmth of feeling behind the wish to persuade as by the power of comprehensive, concrete exposition.

The book is a sort of corrective or postscript to "The Fate of Man," which I reviewed in these columns last fall, finding it admirable in its negative assault and feeble in its proposal of the old goddess Science as the proper nurse for our ills. Now Mr. Wells independently arrives at the recognition that Science with a capital S not only neglects the psychological problems in the world's disorder, but also carries in its train the dogmatism and uniformity upon which theological hate and persecution are founded. He substitutes for science the neutral term research, meaning by it the flexible and modest method of arriving at appropriate social solutions; he significantly praises William James in a similar connection as a "bold and subtle thinker"; he redefines collectivism as the handmaiden of individualism; and best of all, he sets down in four magnificent pages a new Declaration of the Rights of Man.

This may sound like old stuff, but it is not. Mr. Wells is not shrinking back to a mossy political liberalism; he is expressing the clear-eyed conclusions of one abreast with his own latest experience. He has seen it demonstrated all over Europe and Asia that however much the world wants order, it cannot get it by mere violence and the magic of symbols. He has seen that however splendid fanatical dogmatism may feel internally to the possessor, it is the quickest way to chaos externally. There is for him no royal road to order. Knowledge and right will are indispensable. This does not mean that the world will heed, and educate its feelings and thoughts for the sake of self-preservation. But quite properly, Mr. Wells should not care. He has diagnosed the ailment and prescribed the sensible dose. The patient is always at liberty to pass out in self-conceit or with the aid of quacks.

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Heroes and Hero-Worship

OTHER GODS. By Pearl Buck. New York: The John Day Co. 1940. 381 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by BASIL DAVENPORT

IN a foreword to her new novel, Mrs. Buck tells us that it is concerned with a universal problem and tragedy, with the human longing for a deity, if possible a visible deity, and with the effect on any man so unfortunate as to be made a demi-god by his fellow-citizens. The longing is no doubt universal, though it is not often that society allows it free play, though Kipling wrote one of his finest stories on the theme, and Suetonius has given us twelve case-histories. But Mrs. Buck is quite right in suggesting that, when conditions are favorable, the lightning may strike anywhere, and that her Bert Holm might be any one. Actually, he is an American farm boy with a passion for mountaineering; he succeeds (by a deliberate breach of the discipline of the expedition of which he is a member) in climbing, first and alone, a virgin peak, second below Everest. His feat fires the popular imagination; his beauty, his shyness, increase his popularity; and by the time he returns to America, with the sensitive, highly intelligent bride he has married on the way, he is a popular hero, with all that means of popular demands.

The book is the story of their marriage and what becomes of it. Mrs. Buck has worked it out, in the earlier stages especially, with great sympathy and understanding. We see Bert and his wife constantly on parade, the garlanded, sacrificial victims of a public that is instantly resentful if he is not gratified by the five hundredth request for an autograph. We see their discovery of how little, really, they have in common; Bert is one of those human beings who are only magnificently functioning animals, and Kit had married him on the rebound from an over-intellectual, difficult suitor; but she early learns that the absence of brains is not by itself enough to insure marital happiness. And Bert comes to love adulation even while he resents it; he grows sullen and intractable, until it is necessary to hire a smooth public-relations counsel to keep him on his pedestal.

All this is told with great insight, and with a real feeling that it is not Bert's fault if he bends under an unnatural strain; but presently the treatment grows more conventional, and the return of Kit's earlier suitor leads to an ending that seems positively artificial. The reason for the falling-off in the latter part of the book is, one feels, that the author has lost sight of precisely the universal quality in her story which first attracted her to it. The old lawyer who acts as commentator or chorus offers just enough speculation about Bert's apotheosis to make us wish for more; when he suggests that such a thing is most likely to happen in an age that has lost its beliefs, there, one feels, is the line along which the book should develop. And surely, if the theme of the title had been kept in mind, it would have prevented Kit's final self-sacrifice, or at least have let us see that it was false; but Mrs. Buck seems to admire it. But is it really praiseworthy to sacrifice the happiness of two or three people in order that frustrated women may continue to believe that their son or their lover would have been like that? For that matter, is anything gained by the modern illusion that a star in any field is an authority to be believed in all? In fact, even if his feet were not clay, would it be well to worship a golden calf or a golden lad? It was probably not well for Rome—certainly not for the Roman Republic—when Octavius Caesar was called Divine Augustus: but there is no hint in Mrs. Buck's conclusion that she realizes any of this.

Hedi Perles
Pearl Buck

Rousing Romance

SHOW ME A LAND. By Clark McMeekin. New York: D. Appleton-Century Co. 1940. 441 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by STEPHEN VINCENT BENÉT

THIS is a ramping, unashamedly romantic romance, full of beautiful girls, handsome gentlemen, fine horses, moving accidents by flood and field, and quite a lot of vivid and unpretentious historical detail. The keynote of the book is struck in the list of "Principal Characters," which includes such admirably melodramatic figures as "Zurka, a Rom wench, moon-eyed, jealous, passionate, impudent," and "Teague, her vicious gypsy son, graceful, resourceful, brutal." From the moment that sixteen-year-old Dana Terraine, the Virginia belle, encounters dashing young Rike Galphine at the Aintree Fair, we know there's going to be love and trouble—more love and trouble than you can shake a stick at. There's a gypsy prophecy on page 66 and a first-class shipwreck on page 80. By page 135, Jarred Terraine, Dana's father, has gambled away his plantation and is forced to move to Kentucky. And, of course, Rike Galphine turns up in Kentucky, too, but, by then, Dana has married a young Scotch minister, Eben Coates. Wait a minute while I catch my breath, for there's going to be lots more—pioneering, plague, abolition, the Millerites, the Civil War, Reconstruction—and, of course, Rike and Dana came together in the end, though not till after numerous trials, including a marriage apiece. The last scene takes place at the first Kentucky Derby and, though, by that time, both Rike and Dana are seventy, they're still just as brisk and handsome as you can ask for, and as interested in horses. There must be something in the climate—or maybe the bluegrass.

From the jacket of "Show Me a Land"

It's a breathless tale and a dexterous one. It may be—and it is—melodrama, but it makes good reading. Where a good many serious, solid historical novels bog down in their own detail, this one keeps moving. It unashamedly introduces Audubon, Lafayette, and Lincoln when and as convenient, but it doesn't make the mistake of letting prominent historical figures get in the way of the plot. It is full of local color and local customs—it does catch something of the wonder and the freshness of a new, fine land. And the thread that ties the book together—the breeding and racing of fine horses—is admirably and consistently handled. A great deal of the plot comes right out of the toy-theater—not a bit of the book is dull. *If you've ever cheered when* Black Beauty came up from behind to win by a nose or sobbed when Old Massa had to sell the plantation, you are going to like this one. And what a movie it will make!

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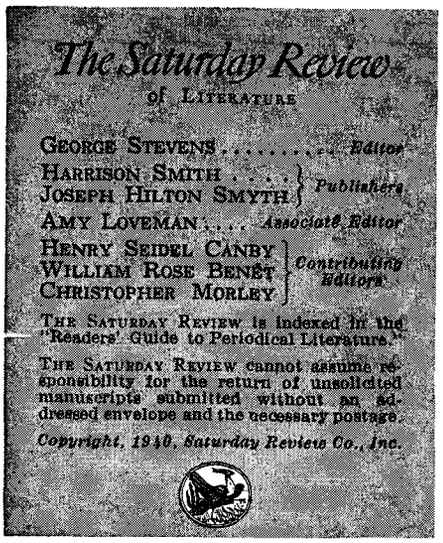
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Humbert Wolfe: 1885-1940

IT was almost fifteen years ago in London that I first met Humbert Wolfe. Even then he was regarded as a man who led a double life with peculiar sangfroid and unusual security. By day he was in the employ of His Majesty—he called himself "a most uncivil Civil Servant"; by night he was a poet. There had been some transatlantic correspondence between us; our meeting was pleasant but not more than professionally polite. At the end of the interview Wolfe presented me with his early but already characteristic "Shylock Reasons with Mr. Chesterton." I had come prepared; I tendered a collection of my parodies.

The exchange was not a fortunate one. We tried to live up to it. At our next meeting, taking the cue from each other's books, we attempted to impress each other by our wit. Wolfe cast himself in the role of a Guildhall Disraeli, to whom he bore a certain physical as well as racial likeness; I said what I fancied Heinrich Heine would have said under the circumstances. It was a dismal performance. I thought Wolfe an accomplished poseur; he thought me (as he confessed later) an unaccomplished boor.

It was not until my second sojourn in England that we became friends. Our intimacy grew on music, flourished on critical discussion. We mocked each other in public—it seemed to be expected of us—we had exchanged the parts of Disraeli and Heine for those of Maltby and Braxton in Max Beerbohm's wicked period piece. But we no longer shielded our serious selves from each other. I insisted that he was hiding behind a false elegance; he admitted the futility, even the falsity, but denied there was anything elegant about it. He looked like a trim falcon, quick-eyed, bright-beaked, and I felt the agile claws sharpening themselves on argument. But he rarely struck.

I remember only one unchecked swoop. There were five or six of us: besides ourselves there were a music-critic, a charming pianiste, a publisher, and the well-known poet X who once had been loudly "hailed," but who was no longer as popular as he had been.

"I can't understand it," said X, who still has something of a name as a novelist. "I haven't changed a bit. My writing is just what it's always been."

"Of course it is," said Wolfe, with as near a purr as a hawk can manage. "And so is your reading."

A few years later Humbert suffered the same fate. He had been underpraised for the spontaneous fancies and tart dissonances of "Kensington Gardens" and "Humoresque," overpraised for the symphonic elaboration of "Requiem." Thereupon he went in for fragility on a large scale. He burdened his neat epithets with more significance than they could bear; he erected a cosmic allegory on every whimsicality. What had been lightly satirical and charming became heavily pretentious and annoying. His colleagues felt sorry for him; the younger men burlesqued him. The anonymous "Poems of Pinchbeck Lyre" is one of the cruelest lampoons ever printed.

Others will have to appraise his work as British propagandist, expert at Geneva, politician with and without portfolio. As a popular author, Humbert outlived his fashion; his was a vogue that could never attain permanence. But he will outlive many louder poets by virtue of his frail-spun but firm delicacies. Such bitter-sweet fantastic lyrics as "The Gray Squirrel," "Lamb," "Thrushes," "Green Candles," "Iliad" (one of the best poems about poetry since O'Shaughnessy's "Ode,"), and "Love in Jeopardy" will find their way into the anthologies for a long time to come.

LOUIS UNTERMEYER.

Ballade

BY DAVID McCORD

THOSE long week-ends beside the sea,
Where Dr. Shelby mulled the port,
And sweet Aunt Mira's smoky tea
Would greet you coming from the court;
When song was fun and walking, sport
(With Dolly Jones—before your time),
The guest-book was the last resort
And someone set it down in rhyme.

Change may have spared the quilting bee—
I wouldn't know—but still the swart
And friendly farmers' jamboree
Can raise a barn against a quart;
And parish picnics breathe a sort
Of odor from that early prime
When all such things would need report,
And someone set it down in rhyme.

Late dinners breaking up at three,
Where all the brilliant minds consort
(The Chowder Club), you might agree,
Are full of wit and quick retort.
They're not. If Wilton's speech was short,
And everything is sweet as chime,
Someone has *something* to exhort—
And someone set it down in rhyme.

Envoi

Prince, there's a diamond dust called *bort*,
And certain verse I call a crime:
Try *that* on your pianoforte—
And, someone, set it down in rhyme!

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Letters to the Editor: *Proposed Revision of Copyright*

Copyright Bill

SIR:—A new bill (S. 3043) for the general revision of our subsisting copyright legislation was presented to the Senate on Monday, January 8, 1940, by Hon. Elbert D. Thomas of Utah, "by request," and was referred to the Committee on Patents. The enactment of this bill is urged by its proponents before there is final action by the Senate approving the proposed adherence to the Rome Copyright Convention of 1928. On March 29, 1930, Senator Thomas, as a member of the Committee on Foreign Relations, submitted his report on this convention and the committee filed on April 11, Senate Executive Report No. 2 (seventy-sixth Congress, first session) recommending adherence to the said Convention.

Senator Thomas states in his report that he is "thoroughly convinced that the treaty should stand on its own feet and be adopted entirely independently of the amendment by statute of the present copyright law;" and he quotes from the recent standard work by Stephen P. Ladas, "The International Protection of Literary and Artistic Property," the author's opinion that "the only practical manner of achieving accession to the copyright Union is by the Senate's voting to advise and consent to the President's taking such action. When this is done several of the provisions of the convention, which are immediately applicable, will be deemed self-executing. For the rest, the effort at amending the Copyright Act may be continued."

Meantime the bill should be carefully studied and amended before enactment. It proposes, for example, to re-enact and extend the requirement of obligatory American manufacture to require that *"all copies of any copyrighted work* . . . in book, pamphlet, map, or sheet form, . . . shall be printed from type set within the limits of the United States."

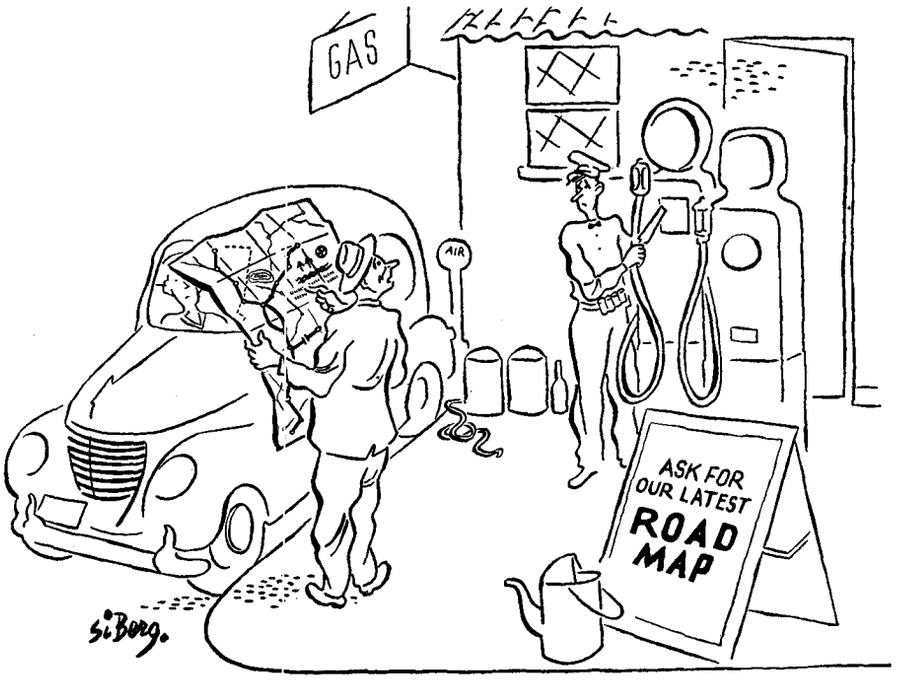
This drastic extension of a requirement that should never have been included in our copyright law, to everything which can be printed, should be eliminated. It has no rightful place in any measure for copyright advancement. It has nothing to do with the principles of literary-property protection. Senator Thomas in his report declares that "all things considered, I am of opinion that the manufacturing clause has become outmoded; that it does not fulfill its objective of making work for American labor. The opportunity to get rid of it which the pending treaty offers is an opportunity which the Senate should welcome."

In the bill our ad interim copyright is eliminated and the novel proposal is substituted permitting the importation of the first 500 copies of the British author's own edition of his book. If copies beyond that number are imported, however, "then no remedies shall be available under this act for the printing, reprinting, publication, distribution or vending of copies of such works made by any process set forth in sub-section one" of Section 29. That is to say, the British author has no remedy in case of any infringement of his book.

The proposal to extend to the British author a protected United States market for the first 500 copies of his book and then to refuse any further protection unless he produces a reprint of it "from type set within the limits of the United States," is not an offer of the honest copyright reciprocity which was contemplated in the first copyright proclamation by President Harrison, declaring on July 1, 1891, that the copyright conditions specified in the Act of March 3, 1891, were fulfilled by Great Britain. Nor is it believed that it would be held to be in compliance with article 4 of the Copyright Treaty of 1928.

THORVALD SOLBERG.
Washington, D. C.

(Mr. Solberg was formerly Register of Copyright.—Ed.)



"What does this mean: Route 49—after riding three miles south, turn right when you come to the crossing near the pines, walk to the pine nearest you, face west, walk ten paces—and start digging?"

Thomas Cole

SIR:—I am at present engaged in writing a life of Thomas Cole, the early American landscape painter and founder of the "Hudson River School." I have already traced many of his pictures and most of the documentary sources relative to him, but in order to make the work complete I shall have to find even more than I have. It is particularly important to me to know the whereabouts of Cole's pictures in private hands. Anything pertaining to Cole: letters, sketches, canvases, or any other memorabilia, would be of value to me.

PARKER LESLEY,
Asst. Professor of Fine Arts
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, Minn.

Lew Wallace

SIR:—I am preparing a biography of General Lew Wallace, author of "Ben Hur," and invite correspondence from anyone possessing material relating to Wallace.

I. MCKEE, Ph.D.
Culver Military Academy
Culver, Ind.

Byron on Education

SIR:—May I point out that the lines on education ascribed to "a contemporary rhymester" ("The Age of Godey's," *SRL,* February 10) come from Byron's "Don Juan," Canto I, Stanza 40? The quotation suggests a generalization about American periodicals in the 18th and 19th centuries. They have a deceptive way of seeming to reflect American life when really they reflect American reading.

ELIZABETH JACKSON.
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, Minn.

Longfellow Letters

SIR:—Anyone possessing manuscript letters by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow will confer a great favor by writing to his grandson, Prof. H. W. L. Dana, 105 Brattle Street, Cambridge, Mass.

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Crime & Conscience

WINDLESS CABINS. By Mark Van Doren. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1940. 280 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by BEN RAY REDMAN

WHAT happens to a man when he has killed another man and concealed the crime? Many writers have asked this question, and answered it, according to their different bents, with varying degrees of ingenuity and power. Many writers have profited from the fact that this question almost inevitably results in a story that is suspenseful and tractive. At worst, the tale draws the reader on by making him wonder: Will the murderer be discovered, will he confess, will he at last escape the burden of his crime, or will he live under its shadow until his days' end? At best, it is whatever the author can make it—a stirring narrative of physical action, an essay in psychological realism, a study in horror, or a cathartic tragedy. In short, the question furnishes a theme fit for pulp fiction or great poetry.

In "Windless Cabins," his second novel, Mr. Van Doren has employed this familiar theme in a narrative pattern of notable simplicity. Ray Slode and Louise Mount are in love, and have been for three years. Louise lives with her Aunt Esther, a woman possessed of surprising intuitions and given to disturbing speech. Ray works as handy-man for Dutch Berger, who owns a group of tourist cabins outside the little town of Windless. Louise and Ray meet every evening for talk and innocent love-making; it is understood they will marry some day, but when we encounter them they appear to be drowsing happily in an unhurried and unhurrying dream. Kisses suffice for their idyll—the flesh is not urgent.

But there arrives at Windless Cabins a transient guest who promises to become a "permanent"—a man belonging to a class with which Dutch Berger's establishment is unfamiliar—and with his coming the dream darkens into nightmare. At first for Ray, who finds himself accidentally trapped in a terrifying pit of his own digging; then for Louise, too, when she goes down into the pit with him, sharing the dreadful knowledge of his burden and his deed, and also giving of her strength.

Having posed his problem, the novelist proceeds towards its resolution. To trace that progress in a review would be to do his future readers little service, but there are certain qualities and characteristics of his story that are a reviewer's business. I have spoken of the dream in which Ray and Louise live, and the word came naturally, for all of "Windless Cabins" has its being in a dreamlike, insubstantial atmosphere. Ray and Louise are suspended in time and space, as are the characters in some of E. A. Robinson's least successful narrative poems. They are less flesh-and-blood than symbols on which to hang a tale. We are told that Louise engages in homely household duties and that Ray sweeps out tourist cabins, but neither belongs to the palpable, smellable, workaday world. Windless itself is only a name, not a place, and we are startled when we are asked to believe that real people come out of it for the surprising party at which Aunt Esther reveals herself as a *dea ex machina*. The few minor figures who are living earth—Dutch and Lena among them—move on another level of existence than Ray's and Louise's.

"Windless Cabins" exhibits the form of a novel and contains the stuff of poetry. But the novel lacks substantiality, and the poetic infusion is not strong enough to make the dream—poet's and actors'—either moving or memorable.

Growing Pains

THE YEARS OF GROWTH. By Harold Sinclair. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1940. 415 *pp.* $2.75.

IN "American Years" Harold Sinclair traced the story of Everton, Illinois, from its founding in 1830 to the outbreak of the Civil War. "The Years of Growth" continues the story through the war years, the frenzied speculation, expansion, panic, and political chicanery and corruption of the seventies, the dullish eighties policed by Frances Willard and Anthony Comstock, and the first years of the sprightlier nineties. This saga of an Illinois county seat is mildly similar to Romains's "Men of Good Will" in its attempt to depict completely both a place and an era. The scale of the French masterpiece is of course much vaster, its characters and their interrelations far less sketchy, although the time-period is much more restricted. Moreover Romains writes of a twentieth-century Paris he knows and has absorbed into himself, whereas the young American novelist has gathered his data from local records and the oldest inhabitants. In both books by Sinclair one is less interested in the characters than the backgrounds, in the gradual metamorphosis of Everton from a pioneer settlement to an agricultural center, and finally to an industrial city with attendant social and economic changes in the lives of its people.

Everton is in reality Bloomington and its collegiate suburb, a city unusually rich in historical associations. Stephen A. Douglas and Abraham Lincoln argued their cases in its courthouse; Lincoln attended the state organization meeting of the Republican Party there in 1854; Elbert Hubbard and Richard Hovey were born there, and Bob Ingersoll spent many hours in the local tavern in oracular debate. The novelist succeeds in giving to the local habitation a wide significance, for what happened to Bloomington happened to the Mississippi Valley, in fact to America. The ugliness and dullness of the town (unstressed in the novel, which has little satirical thrust) are the ugliness and dullness of our nation in its least inspiring era. Even after the shattering experience of a grave civil war America was still agitated by adolescent strivings but was moving slowly toward self-confidence and maturity.

From the jacket of "The Years of Growth"

Although the people have a generic interest as products of their time, they are less memorable than certain vivid scenes—the escape from Andersonville Prison, the passing of the trainload of Confederate prisoners through Everton, the great sleet storm, the Chicago fire, etc. "The Years of Growth" is panoramic and pageant-like in design, full of loose ends, teeming with people and unconnected episodes. The novelist, however, succeeds in synthesizing this welter of material into an effective account of America during its period of growing pains. Mr. Sinclair's writing is rarely distinguished or exciting. It is never invertebrate or shoddy, never sensational or meretricious, but there is a jogging commonplaceness which is often too soothing, and which dims the brilliance of his fine pageant of the years.

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Patriarchal Giant

DECADE, 1929-1939. By Stephen Longstreet. New York: Random House. 1940. 398 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by ORRICK JOHNS

IT takes audacity to give an ambitious title to a first novel. The word "decade" covers a great deal of ground, and any weakness in managing the complex subject would have been fatal. Mr. Longstreet proves as confident of his powers as he is bold in conception; and we have here an intensely interesting, densely populated, and dashing chronicle.

The theme is superb: the story of a great American industrialist and his family empire gradually beaten down by the depression—dwindling demand for its manufactured products, slow destruction of its vast paper holdings. It was the family of a patriarchal giant, and its members had few qualms about the legitimacy of their descendants, so the relationships are involved even to the fourth generation. The able young novelist leaves none of these threads confused.

John Christian Rowlandson, "The Old One," is eighty-eight when the story opens. His own tenth decade coincides with the years 1929-1939 of the book; and you feel that to him these are the maddest years of all, in spite of his feverishly active life as a fur trapper, Indian captive, gold miner, Union Soldier, owner of stage lines, clipper ships, and railroads. He is now a manufacturer of metal products, head of a hundred subsidiaries, a ribald, skeptical, driving old man, with a vast sense of humor and more vitality than the young ones. On his eighty-eighth birthday he says: "Mine has been a varied life. . . . I am no wiser now than when I kissed my first wench, stole my first dollar, killed my first man, sired my first child, or went on my first drunk." Perhaps not, but he is wise.

Rowlandson Corporations was under the command of his son's son-in-law, Stephan Mather, a self-made Hungarian immigrant, and as the book opens, he, more than any other, hears the rumblings of the storm, the crash ahead to pay for frantic stock inflation. Stephan opposes, with all his "honest business" nature, the manipulations and holding-company devices suggested by the bank to bolster the enterprise at the expense of stockholders. He gambles on his own physical energy and mental resources to save it and dies from overwork. Deterioration is rapid. Chass Gillesbee, the firm's banker, goes to Sing Sing; Christopher, great grandson and idol of the Old One, is killed in a Spanish Loyalist advance; Mary Eddy, Stephan's widow, is compelled to teach bridge and run a gambling club; and the bastard son, Pete—a well loved sophisticate at seventy—kills himself. The home, Cliff Tor, goes under the hammer.

These events shock John Christian, but leave him as gay and outrageously cynical as ever. On his ninety-eighth birthday we find him eating like a horse and drinking Chinese brandy with the soldier son of his cook, just returned from the wars. He retires to end his days in an old boathouse. No city apartment for the Old One! "It's like being a nut embedded in a chocolate bar."

The book is written in a hard, crisp style, and the author gives all the poetry and sensitiveness he has to old John Christian; the servants come next in sympathetic delineation. It is a full-length portrait of exciting warmth and charm. "Decade" is a brilliant novel, without a dull moment.

Novice

THE CONVENT. By Alyse Simpson. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1940. 311 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by ROSEMARY CARR BENÉT

WHAT life can be like in a cloistered religious order is always a matter of speculation and interest to those outside the walls. "The Convent" describes, in the first person, the life and emotions of a novice during her novitiate in the convent of the Mystic Rose in Switzerland. The author's own experience gave her the material for the book, which she says is not written against the Catholic religion. "It is not my enmity to religion that speaks, but my memory of much suffering." Still it is not an impartial account.

The "true call"—the vocation—is hard to define, but is apparently a definite thing. From what spring comes a mystic desire to retire from this world to prepare for the next, is a question in itself. A Catholic might well say that the "I" of this book never had a vestige of a true vocation. Even to the lay mind, her reasons for going into the convent seem inadequate and frivolous. "I knew then that John would never come and it was then that I decided to renounce the world." Later at the convent, the reverend mother asks "What are your reasons for wanting to renounce the world?", and she says, "My heart skipped a beat. I did not know. After all, how could anyone explain? 'Oh, just because . . . well, it's difficult to know. I shall be very happy here,' I added brightly". Convents are usually careful to discount a broken heart.

Alyse Simpson

The Church wisely does not encourage "Get thee to a nunnery" as a solution for those crossed in love. In any case, it seems unusual that both convent and novice didn't do a little more questioning and investigating before so important a step.

Certainly Miss Simpson's choice of a convent was unfortunate. A more somber and unhappy sisterhood can scarcely be imagined. The Mystic Rose had a group of seven nuns in various stages of lunacy who were kept in barred apartments on the top floor from which they were heard moaning. A number of borderland cases were at large. Our novice speaks constantly of the smell of unwashed bodies, and of rats that ran over the sleepers' pillows. The health record was deplorable. The nuns, in spite of hard outdoor work in the gardens, were tubercular or consumptive in a high percentage of cases. The food was bad. The Mother Superior was penurious. The sanitation was medieval. Added to this, on the spiritual side, there was an appalling lack of harmony and peace, or even simple understanding.

In the same group with our novice at the nunnery were Stephany, the high-spirited daughter of a Polish Baroness, and Melanie, a gentle, innocent German girl who was pushed to the safety of a religious life by her father. The "I" of the book finds she has not a vocation and leaves the convent, promising her friends to return. In fulfillment of her vow, she comes back twenty years later, after she has gone out into the world and married. She finds the once rebellious Stephany now the Mother Superior. Melanie is worn out and neurotic, and the general unhappy air of the Mystic Rose is unchanged.

The book is well written, though it sometimes sounds a little like a translation. The daily life in the convent is carefully described. The account is detailed but certainly not dispassionate, nor impartial. It would be interesting to hear the other nuns's side of the story.

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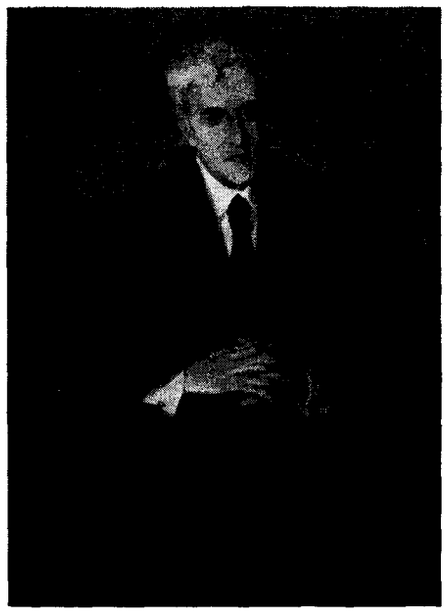
BOOK PREVIEW*

Justice Cardozo's Reading

BY GEORGE S. HELLMAN



Benjamin N. Cardozo: from a portrait by Bernhard Gutmann

"THE things that really count," Cardozo called them, "art and letters and the like." As a reader, Cardozo offers an opportunity it would be a pity to forego. Judges, lawyers, teachers, and students of philosophy and of law will doubtless scan the footnotes of his various volumes, following thereby the vast range of his reading in his professional field. Holmes and Haldane, Learned Hand and Lowes Dickinson, Pollock and Lippmann, Whitehead and Wigmore, Dewey and Cohen, Beard and Giddings, Royce and Spinoza and Robinson, Blackstone, of course, and Hughes and Frankfurter — these are only a few of the authors whose writings Cardozo had studied. So many more besides—French, German, Austrian, Swiss and Italian — contributed to the armory of Cardozo's implements at the Bar and on the Bench. But to the general reader, who from time to time is offered a list of the "best books" to be placed, it may be, on a five-foot shelf, why not give the titles of the books ordered by Cardozo either for himself or as gifts to friends during those last years of his life when he found more leisure—though never enough—to indulge his taste for writings not directly pertaining to his professional work? But that, after all, would be too long a list—like Homer's catalogue of ships, where fewer vessels would have sufficed to indicate the extent of the fleet. So let us give the Justice's selection for the season of 1936-1937.

George Santayana—"Dialogues in Limbo"
Granville Hicks—"John Reed"
Irving Stone—"Lust for Life"
George Santayana — "The Last Puritan"
Henry W. Nevinson—"The Fire of Life"
Lewis & Smith—"Oscar Wilde Discovers America"
John Masefield—"The Letter to Pontus"
H. A. L. Fisher—"The History of Europe"
J. R. Commons — "Institutional Economics"
George Santayana—"Obiter Scripta"
John Gunther—"Inside Europe"
Beatrice & Sidney Webb—"Soviet Communism"
Clarence Day—"God and My Father"
Margaret Mitchell — "Gone with the Wind"
Claude G. Bowers—"Jefferson in Power"
Lord Haldane—"Autobiography"
Trevelyan—"Life of John Bright"
Van Wyck Brooks—"The Flowering of New England"
Desmond MacCarthy—"Portraits"
Desmond MacCarthy—"Criticism"
Desmond MacCarthy—"Leslie Stephen"
Victor Heiser—"An American Doctor's Odyssey"
Baudelaire—"Flowers of Evil"
Lin Yutang—"My Country and My People"
Sir Wm. Rothenstein—"Men and Memories"
Mrs. Winthrop Chandler — "Autumn in the Valley"
A. E. Zimmern—"The Greek Commonwealth"
Allen Nevins—"Hamilton Fish"
"The Letters of Mrs. Henry Adams"
G. K. Chesterton — "Autobiography"
Virginia Woolf—"The Years"
G. H. S. Fifoot—"Lord Mansfield"
J. P. Marquand—"The Late George Apley"
Odell Shepard — "Pedlar's Progress"
Carl Van Doren—"Three Worlds"
A. E. Housman — "Introductory Lecture"
C. H. Young—"Victorian England"
Herman Niernberg—"Einstein for Everybody"
Ralph Barton Perry—"The Thought and Character of William James"
Winston Churchill—"Great Contemporaries"
Augustine Birrell—"Things Past Redress"
Theobald Mathew—"For Lawyers and Others"
Lord Lytton—"Antony"
"The Journal of Eugene Delacroix"
Duncan Phillips—"Giorgeone"
G. A. Borgese—"Goliath"
"The Letters of John J. Chapman"
Stephen Vincent Benét — "The Devil and Daniel Webster"
F. J. E. Woodbridge—"The Son of Apollo"
Robert McElroy—"Jefferson Davis"
Irwin Edman—"Four Ways of Philosophy"
A. S. Eddington—"Science and the Unseen World"
Julius Lips—"The Savage Hits Back"

In this list of over fifty titles there are only five novels—including "The Last Puritan," which might be classed, rather, as a work of disillusioned philosophy. Not easily affected by popular opinion in literature and the hullabaloo of advertisement, Cardozo was only after much persuasion induced to read "Gone with the Wind." Mrs. Arthur Hays Sulzberger, wife of the President of the New York Times Corporation—a kinsman of Cardozo's—had told the Judge of her enjoyment of the Civil War story. "It may be a book for young romantic people," he said, "but not for an old Judge like myself." Undiscouraged by this comment, Mrs. Sulzberger took the novel to Cardozo's nearby country residence at White Plains. Under these circumstances it seemed discourteous not, at least, to glance at the novel. Cardozo set forth on romantic miles of type, continued the journey to the end—almost without stopping.

In his letters to Aline Goldstone—and his letters to women reveal in greater degree than any other source the gayety of spirit and lambent wit of which he was capable—he spoke over and over of books that he had read, sharing with her his enthusiasms. " 'The Bridge of San Luis Rey' I had read in New York. I found it very wonderful; some of the sentences were so perfect I learned them—almost automatically—by heart. The transforming power of art is there exhibited to perfection. . . . The other volume, the essays by Yeats, I am reading now. I admire them, though being little of a mystic I find it hard to understand them. Also I resent some of my own

*The following article constitutes part of a chapter of Mr. Hellman's biography, "Benjamin N. Cardozo," to be published by Whittlesey House in March.

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feeling of admiration. Why should one love such meaningless obscurities? But there is a charm in the twilight even though it is the precursor of the darkness."

"The delightful little book [Edna St. Vincent Millay's "Aria da Capo"] dropped into my lap a few hours ago, and I devoured it at once. That is the great thing about food for the *psyche* as distinguished from food for the body—one can go on devouring it again and again. So I mean to do with this dainty morsel, this recherché little tidbit.

"I do so envy the writers who can express the inexpressible. That is what we all try to do whenever we have anything to put into words, but most of us fail. Here comes along a new writer—new to me—though, I suppose, not new to the elect—and does the trick so blithely and gaily and deftly before our astonished and bewildered eyes. You have introduced me to some clever and charming people in your apartment, but now you have added to the benefaction by the introduction of a fairy sprite."

Later, the Judge has been reading Galsworthy. "The Forsyte Saga" and "Swan Song" arouse his enthusiasm. "Nothing finer," it seemed to him, "has been written in our day. The Saga is perhaps the best."

The intellectual quality in Edwin Arlington Robinson's poetry appealed to Cardozo, and he found no difficulty in following the sometimes involved thought. But when it came to Joyce's "Ulysses," "I'm too lazy," he wrote, "to force open these stiff rebellious doors when many a fine corridor lies beckoning before me. All the same I read the article on Joyce with interest."

Before sailing for Europe the Goldstones sent Cardozo a book that had interested them, Ortega y Gasset's "Revolt of the Masses." "The book is here as if you had thrown it city-ward from the dock . . . I'll enjoy 'The Revolt'—of that I am sure. Is it an obscure something in the blood that wakens an extra thrill and tremor at the call of Spanish art? Who knows! At all events I feel quite certain that Señor Ortega's book will not suffer in my sight by reason of its Spanish origin. We have looked to Spain so long for gayety and amusement. There is the charm of the unexpected in finding that she can furnish us with food for sober thought."

"Last night," he wrote later, "I sat in bed reading a new story—or the first installment of it—by Virginia Woolf. The title is 'Flush,' and it is the biography of a cocker spaniel. Never was a dog soul more winsomely laid bare, but Flush was more than a cocker spaniel, he was the pet of Elizabeth Barrett Browning. So the story will tell us about dogs and poets. You will want to read it because of its poetry, and Harmon because it is written by Mrs. Woolf, and I because it tells about a dog."

Novels and verse, romance and poetry, continue to be discussed by the two friends. Cardozo does not admire Thomas Mann's "Joseph and his Brothers" as much as Aline does, but obviously likes George Meredith more than what he calls "the present tribe of novelists." "Diana of the Crossways" had recently aroused his enthusiasm anew for the great Victorian writer whose intricacy of style necessitates contributary effort from the reader.

The closing months of 1934 saw politics creep into the letters. There was a deep satisfaction for Cardozo in the election of his friend Herbert Lehman to the Governorship of New York, and in the early months of 1935 there was grief at the death of Oliver Wendell Holmes. "Holmes was great. His life work had been finished, but he remained a magnificent symbol. The world is poorer without him. I was the last person to visit him before he took to his bed." The jurist who succeeded Oliver Wendell Holmes then discusses with his friend the Supreme Court decision which disturbed so many Americans. Had not the good name of their country become slightly tarnished by the verdict releasing the Government from adhering to a provision obligating the redemption of United States issues in gold? Cardozo's private sense of honor does not come into the picture, although it is suggested, when he writes: "As to the 'gold cases,' I don't wonder you are troubled by them. The difficulty is that most people fancy it to be the business of the Court to condemn as 'unconstitutional' everything that is unfair. Nothing of the kind! There is room for a lot of immorality within the confines of the Constitution and of Constitutional law. . . . The Court year has been a trying one." And later, "a cruel year—from the standpoint of courts and court terms."

"Will Rogers's judgment upon mankind," Cardozo told Aline, "sounds fine when separated from its setting. What he really said, however—(at least, that is my understanding)—was that he had met many *prominent* men and had never met one he didn't like. That is not quite so magnificent, is it? Your tramp with the unshaven chin could hardly come in that category. Well, I'm willing to go pretty far in my love for humankind, but I can't have stubbly chins around me. Fix me up, if you please, an epitaph to suit those sentiments."

Later Cardozo mentions Dr. Rosalie Slaughter Morton, whose book entitled "A Woman Surgeon" gives fine evidence of a life valuable and eventful. Cardozo had enjoyed meeting the author and reading her book. Less enjoyment, however, he seems to have found in "Poems" by C. Day Lewis, sent to him that September by his friend.

"The book by Lewis was slow in coming, and I have waited till I had time to read it before writing my thanks again. Dear child, it is too obscure and subtle for my dull and plodding mind. I found it interesting, just as I find the most modern music; I like to see the latest patterns that the thought and feeling of the hour weave, but it would be only an affectation to say that they give me the thrill and the lift that come from poetry as of old I knew it. Perhaps if you or one of your bright boys sat down beside me and we were to read it together, the missing tingle of the flesh—or is it the top of the cranium or the spine?—would come to me. Perhaps even alone I might get it if I were to dig the spade deep into the soil—but I am too old and weary for such toilsome work, I must skim my gold from the top layer. Also I like verse to sing, and there is little singing here.

"All this is not to say that I don't get illuminating flashes now and then. Still less is it to say that I didn't find a thrill of interest in learning the latest modes of art. Indeed I discovered myself saying that I must read Spender and Aiken and Jeffers and the rest of them. I have not lost my curiosity even if I lack the taste that ought to guide it."

Later he wrote, "I have read Carrel's book ["Man, the Unknown"] and found it stimulating and interesting, though, as so often is the case, he falls down when he suggests a remedy. I have no faith in his academy of superscientists. I have seen enough of the fallibility of super-judges generally."

There was another correspondent of these Washington years, Doris Webster. She sent the Justice a copy of her book, "I've Got Your Number," wherein the answer to a group of questions lead to Key Numbers of character studies. Cardozo reports that his Key Number is 1345. The analysis of character given for this number reads in part: "You like to think of yourself as an independent soul, complete and self-contained. Man, it is trying to be what you are not that makes you unhappy. You have a naturally faithful heart hitched up to a wide-ranging imagination—a difficult team to

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drive. . . . A sense of insecurity has hung over from your childhood. Something has kept you from being one of the gang."

When he learned that a copy was being mailed to him, Cardozo wrote: "I wonder, did you autograph it? Even if you didn't, I can paste your letter on the flyleaf of the volume where friends will be quick to see it when with premediated carelessness I leave it in their way. Alas! What indiscretion—to give myself away by the revelation of this vanity! You will have my number, sure.

"The heading of this letter will tell you of my new abode in Washington, from which expressmen and porters have just been driven forth, leaving me happy in their going, but homesick for the scenes and faces that I have had to leave behind."

"So far as I can see," laments Cardozo, "1345 is not a very interesting sort of fellow, which confirms the estimate of my own qualities and powers that I formed long ago, though I have hesitated to communicate it to an unsuspecting world. If I feel too depressed at any time, I'll turn to the inscription on the flyleaf and find balm and solace there."

In return, Cardozo is informed that his "number" indicates a genius. "I thought your discernment was infallible," he tells her, "but alas! you have made a slip. You have sized me up as a bit of a genius—admitting me into your own group—and, once more alas! I am nothing of the kind. As I told some college lads last spring, I am only a plodding mediocrity — a plodding one, please observe, for a mediocrity *simpliciter* stands still when a plodding one goes far if the road is not too steep."

Choosing a sentence here and there from Cardozo's writing, Doris Webster had achieved a quatrain. Cardozo is much amused. "Many years ago," he relates, when I was a struggling member of the bar, I tried a case with the euphonious title *State Bank vs. Wilchinsky*. My client, the president of the bank, assured me in an outburst of gratitude, that the name of that case ought to be written on my tombstone.

"Now at last I have an inscription more dignified and worthier. The poem that I wrote and that you deciphered beneath the palimpsest is to be carved upon the granite, bearing witness to my title as the first unwitting bard in history.

"Mathematicians tell us that Shakespeare's plays could have been written without an effort of mind if the letters of the alphabet had been shuffled long enough. I never really believed it, but now at last I do."

The Washington Theme

(*Continued from page 4*)

an American hero, for he united courage, consummate military ability, and the purest patriotism. Yet he was not without faults, and half his military career was given to a long battle with Congress—a battle in which Washington naturally supported him. Early in 1777, when Congress showed discontent with the manner in which Washington was conducting the war, the commander-in-chief sent him to Philadelphia to explain matters. He ruffled some men while conciliating others. Then the summer of 1777 brought on the resounding battle between Congress and three of Washington's generals, Greene, Sullivan, and Knox. The Frenchman DuCoudray, sent over by Silas Deane, had been reported as about to get a commission as major-general antedating Greene's, with command of all the artillery; and the three generals angrily threatened to resign forthwith. Congress gave way on DuCoudray. But it wrathfully demanded that Washington reprimand the trio of commanders for trying to bully the civil government, and called on them for apologies. Greene gave none. Later came the still fiercer quarrel between him and Congress over his work as quartermaster-general. It would be enlightening to know much more about all this than the cautious pen of G. W. Greene tells us.

And still more enlightenment might easily be drawn from a thorough treatment of that remarkable figure Horatio Gates. He was a man of some fine qualities. The way in which after the war he used a fortune gained by marriage in caring for penniless veterans was much to his credit. At Cambridge in 1775, says the Dictionary of American Biography, he showed himself "a capable administrator, an indefatigable worker, and a loyal supporter" of Washington. Some students of the Revolution now believe that the credit for the victory at Saratoga was far more largely his than earlier writers supposed; that strategically and tactically he followed precisely the right course. Nearly all students now admit that the fault for the rout at Camden was not his, and that he behaved bravely. The great controversial chapter in his career concerns his appointment by Congress as president of the Board of War in 1777, and his supposed complicity in the vague affair called the Conway Cabal. This complicity led to fierce condemnation during his lifetime and afterwards. No doubt it offers the chief reason why he has never had a published biography. And yet how much real evidence exists? His chief accuser was the scoundrel Wilkinson, with whom he fought a duel. Mr. R. G. Adams in the "D.A.B." tells us that "it is difficult to establish the fact that Gates actually shared in a conspiracy to secure Washington's position." It seems very possible that Washington was not fair at all points to Gates, and more than possible that three generations of Washington's admirers have been extremely unfair to him.

A great man has to be set candidly against his background, and his greatness is not diminished by doing justice to his opponents, even when they are small as Mifflin or as dubious in character as Conway. But perhaps the chief desideratum for a due understanding of the milieu in which Washington worked, political and military, is a good history of that strange body, the Continental Congress. We now have both its journals and its members' letters conveniently printed. Were the material fully analyzed and skillfully presented, we would know better just where Washington agreed and disagreed with Congress in such policies as long-term enlistments and half-pay for officers; just why John Adams declared himself sick of "Fabian systems," adding, "My toast is for a short and violent war"; just how far the cabal for Washington's removal (and even Adams believed for a time in the annual elections of generals) went; just where the civil authority was justified in its fears and jealousies, and where it was not.

No doubt with general propriety, the Congress has been handled roughly by everyone. It bungled the services of supply shamefully. Its treatment of financial matters was clumsy in the extreme. Discord brooded over its sessions, the members quarreling with one another, with the lesser generals, and with the long-suffering commander-in-chief. Dr. Burnett, who knows the subject as nobody else does, speaks of the littleness of most of the members. He refers to Washington as "patiently enduring the whines and whiffling criticisms, the nagging tactics, the snaps and snarls of small-fry politicians in Congress, refusing to retort upon his critics until the moment arrived when he could deal the serpent an effective blow." And yet probably the old spirit of undiluted encomium for everything that Washington did, and of unqualified condemnation for all that his opponents attempted, has resulted in some overstatement of the case against Congress. If it was a wrangling, shrewish, inept assemblage, it had merely the faults of all parliamentary bodies in time of crisis, and Washington did not suffer more from it than Lincoln did from its successor. As for the Conway Cabal, Dr. Burnett rightly remarks

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that it is "one of the historical puzzles of the Revolution." It is certain that rash Conway, that curious Irish-born, French-trained leader, did not form any cabal, though Mifflin and some figures in Congress may have done so. And it must be remembered that Congress had a right to dismiss its military commander. It was Washington himself who said: "When we assumed the soldier, we did not lay aside the citizen"—and he never said anything finer. The movement against the commander was not that treason which some writers have thought it, however furtive its organization and egregious its folly.

In this year 1940, with history being made with confusing rapidity, the opening of the Revolution lies one hundred and sixty-five years behind us, while Washington has been in his grave one hundred and forty-one years. Were time all that were required, we have had time enough to write the history of the war for independence, the framing of that Constitution which Washington said would "render millions happy or miserable," and the maiden course of the new government; time to draw a full portrait of the leader whose wisdom, integrity, and fearlessness set him far above even that astonishing cloud of great men produced by the convulsion. But much more than time has been needed. Materials had to be slowly accumulated; and a change of attitude had to accompany that accumulation. The day gradually arrived, after the filiopietistic or Bancroftian age, when Americans became willing to admit that the Revolution was not a contest of light against darkness, and that principle and selfishness were mingled in not too unequal quantities on both sides. A little later came a day when they admitted that their arch-hero Washington had committed his share of errors, and that Charles Francis Adams had much reason in criticizing his generalship. Later still they admitted even minor flaws of temper and character in the man. Perhaps they will yet confess that at times his opponents were right, and he was wrong, and that in all controversies we need not take his side. For Washington had that rare order of greatness in which much may be conceded to the critic, and his eminence will still remain all but undiminished.

The materials for a biography worthy of the theme are gradually being made ready, though some are still wanting; the stern critical temper needed is fast being supplied. Soon we may be able to say that the bow lies strung and ready. Where is the Ulysses who will be able to bend it?

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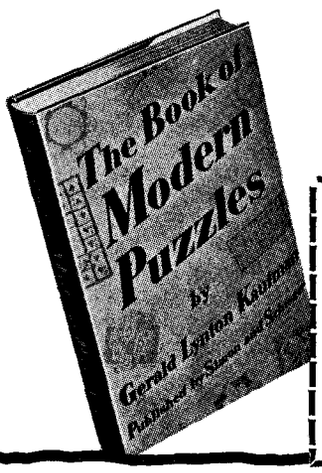

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GALSWORTHY
. . . who wrote the propaganda novel of the Victorians which the 1920's destroyed.

CONRAD
. . . an "outsider," concerned with simple people but subtle method.

MANSFIELD
. . . an "insider" who refined herself before looking out on life.

WOOLF
. . . who refined life before looking out on it.

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. . . who developed from disappointed romantic to satisfied mystic.

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. . . an aesthetic escapist who seeks to compenate by technique for having no point of view.

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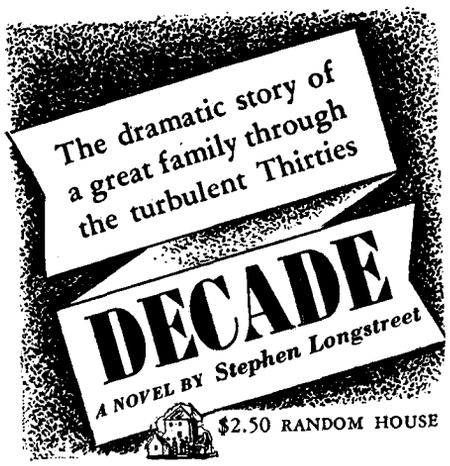
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Publishing and Its Raw Materials

THE ENGLISH BOOK TRADE. By Marjorie Plant. New York: R. R. Bowker Co. 1939. 500 *pp., with index.* $5.

Reviewed by FRANK MORLEY

A FEW weeks ago, I think in the *Publishers' Weekly,* there was an editorial which exhorted each person who belonged to the world of printing and of books to read, during the month, at least one book on the history of printing. Excellent advice: even better for those out of the book trade than for those in it, for unless the purchaser is at least as well educated as the purveyor, there is no improvement possible.

But in this year of the five hundredth anniversary of printing, I wouldn't stick too closely to the art of typography. It is a fine art, but a minor one; and it needs to be seen in relation to the much greater art of communication or persuasion. That is why, in a year when there is much attention to the art of printing, I like to call attention to such a book as Marjorie Plant's, on "The English Book Trade." There is a certain modest pretence of academic severity in its sub-title: "An Economic History of the Making and Sale of Books." There is a certain politeness also about the Preface and the Table of Contents, with its rather frigid divisions into "The Age of Hand-Printing" and "The Application of Mechanical Power." Nonsense! From my point of view there is no age of hand-printing, no age of mechanical power, in the sense in which there is an age of Chaucer, an age of Shakespeare, an age of Dryden, an age of Byron, an age of Dickens, an age of P. G. Wodehouse. What is communicated, rather than how it is communicated, divides life into ages.

That is not to say that the mechanics of communication are uninteresting; but it is to say that they must always be subordinate; the whole book trade, with all of its attendant arts, inventions, and manipulations, adds up to nothing unless it can be flexible, receptive, helpful towards its raw material—that intangible raw material of communication between writer and reader. And that is why Miss Plant's book is of extraordinary interest. I am not arguing against her; I am arguing from what she tells me. The problems of making and selling any material commodity arouse a special kind of curiosity; but though ostensibly dealing with that curiosity, she is dealing with much more. It is not merely the economic problems of the English book trade from the beginning which she exposes, but also the adaptability of that trade towards its raw material; the unusual flexibility and changes of direction not merely for economic reasons; in short, the common understanding of literature. Common understanding is perhaps a misleading phrase: I do not mean that every publisher and every bookseller has always had an intuition for literature; but that in almost every generation in London there has been one, and sometimes more than one, who had such feeling; and that such a one was not squeezed out of existence. In the sense that there has been a common understanding of music in Vienna, there has been an understanding of literature in London. There is no more impressive or interesting testimony to that, than in Miss Plant's admirable, documented, and lively economic history of the English book trade.

Frank Morley, for ten years a director of the London publishing house of Faber and Faber, is now a director and trade editor of Harcourt, Brace and Co.

American Saints

SAINTS IN ACTION. By Dumas Malone. New York: The Abingdon Press. 1940. 183 *pp., with index.* $2.

Reviewed by HERBERT ASBURY

THIS book consists of six lectures on American religious biography delivered at Drew University by Dr. Malone, who for seven years was associated with that great scholarly project, The Dictionary of American Biography. For five and one-half years he was its editor-in-chief. In a foreword he describes "Saints in Action" as "the attempt of a layman, who is not a specialist in religious history or biography, to draw illustrations of saintliness from the rich record of American achievement as a whole, and to apply to the deeds of certain religious men and women the tests of honest but finite personal judgment." After an introductory chapter on "The Varieties of Saintliness in America," Dr. Malone devotes a chapter each to the clergy, crusading reformers, women saints, the evangelists of education, and secular saints of learning.

As far as I am concerned, "Saints in Action" is an impossible book to review without apparently doing the author an injustice. It is an expertly prepared and extremely interesting series of lectures, and I have no doubt that Dr. Malone's students derived great profit from them. But between covers they are still lectures; they should be heard rather than read. In book form

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 308)

COUNT LEO TOLSTOY
WAR AND PEACE

When actions flagrantly contradict what humanity calls good and even right, the historians bring up the saving idea of greatness. Greatness seems to exclude the possibility of applying the standards of good and evil.

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they suffer from the defects that are nearly always apparent in such collections. They cover too much ground at too swift a pace; in 178 pages Dr. Malone dashes through the whole field of American biography, discussing all too briefly the saintliness of such diverse personalities as John Brown, Horace Mann, Thomas Jefferson, and Stonewall Jackson, and a hundred others besides. His purpose was to survey selected groups from the past American scene, and to essay some comments on their historical achievements and importance. But it seems to me that Dr. Malone's surveys are overcrowded, and that his comments and judgments are typically those of a lecturer—hurried and incomplete. For that reason the title of the book is misleading. Dr. Malone discusses the saintliness of a large number of men and women, but he shows few if any, "in action." It is not showing Cotton Mather in action, for example, simply to say of him that "he was relatively unsuccessful as a politician and unlovable as a person, but was eminent in his generation and still commands respect for his scholarship." That's just lecturer talk.

I wish Dr. Malone had expanded his lectures before permitting them to be printed in book form. Had he done so, I believe that "Saints in Action" would have been an important contribution to the study of American biography.

Herbert Asbury is the author of "A Methodist Saint."

Still There's a Way Out

THE IMPASSE OF DEMOCRACY, A STUDY OF THE MODERN GOVERNMENT IN ACTION. By Ernest S. Griffith. New York: Harrison-Hilton Books. 1939. 380 *pp., with index.* $3.

Reviewed by ROBERT C. BROOKS

IN the concluding chapter of "Recent Social Trends," published six years ago, a formidable barrage of questions was laid down by Professor Charles E. Merriam. Most of these questions dealt with "the heavy pressure of powerful social, economic, and technical forces" threatening to crush the shell of a government which becomes more and more important in the social and economic situation. Dean Griffith's book is largely concerned with pressures of the same character. He does not, however, limit himself to American trends; his study attempts "a synthesis of phenomena in all nations, even of those as diverse as Russia, Germany, and the United States." Ambitious as is this program there can be no doubt of the large measure of success achieved by the author, particularly in the enumeration of general trends. Even more worthy of praise is his resourcefulness in prescribing adaptations by which democracies may meet threatening forces from within as well as from without.

On the latter score one may query whether the word "impasse" in the title of the book is accurately descriptive. Certainly the author believes there's a way out for the democracies, albeit a difficult and complicated one. Also he is convinced that the dictatorships face much harder problems. However, the amount of space given to the troubles of Messrs. Hitler, Stalin, Mussolini, *et al.,* is so limited that to the hasty reader it might appear that these imperious gentlemen are having an easier time of it then is in fact the case.

Dean Griffith's constructive proposals for overcoming the ills of democracy necessarily cover a wide range. Whether they deal with broad fields or with some detail, the reader is left in no doubt as to any essential feature.

A liberal at heart, profoundly convinced of the necessity of preserving the dignity of the individual personality, Dean Griffith is ready to adopt anything of value, even in the institutions of dictatorship—for example, their coördinated planning, functional administration, emphasis upon duties and sacrifices. Finally among competing ideologies he attaches fundamental importance to Christianity with its insistence upon the sacredness of human personality.

Mr. Brooks is president of the American Political Science Association.

THE author of AS I WAS GOING DOWN SACKVILLE STREET writes a very serious kind of light-hearted book, the witty, delightful account of an Irishman going native amongst the queer English . . .

GOING NATIVE

By Oliver St. John Gogarty

Senator, surgeon, poet, author, and "the wildest wit in Ireland," Dr. Gogarty is famous for his conversation, for his wit that is wisdom. Now he has written a critique of a way of life which will probably cause a great many Englishmen to wish him quietly back in Dublin.

Published in America six months ahead of the English publication GOING NATIVE is a genuine first edition. At all bookstores $3.00

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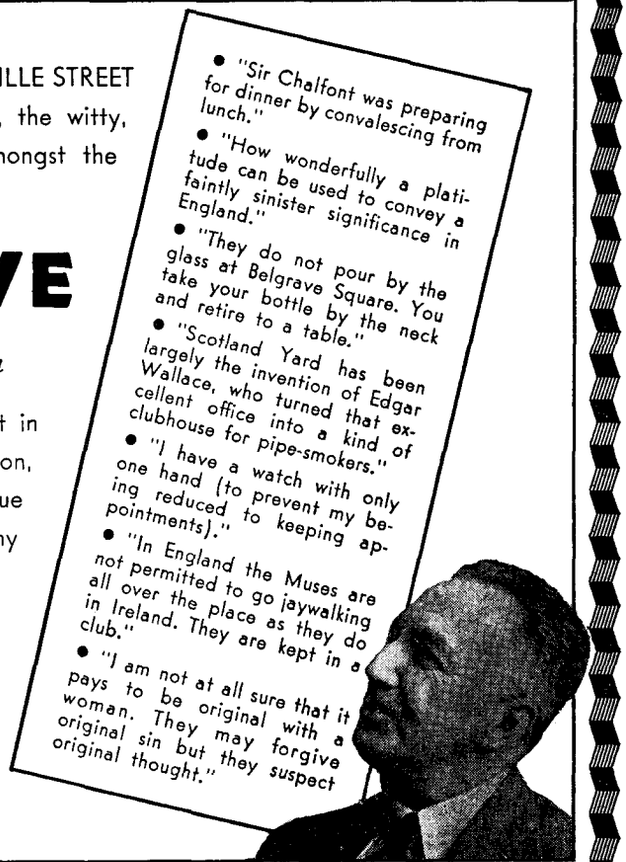
● "Sir Chalfont was preparing for dinner by convalescing from lunch."
● "How wonderfully a platitude can be used to convey a faintly sinister significance in England."
● "They do not pour by the glass at Belgrave Square. You take your bottle by the neck and retire to a table."
● "Scotland Yard has been largely the invention of Edgar Wallace, who turned that excellent office into a kind of clubhouse for pipe-smokers."
● "I have a watch with only one hand (to prevent my being reduced to keeping appointments)."
● "In England the Muses are not permitted to go jaywalking all over the place as they do in Ireland. They are kept in a club."
● "I am not at all sure that it pays to be original with a woman. They may forgive original sin but they suspect original thought."

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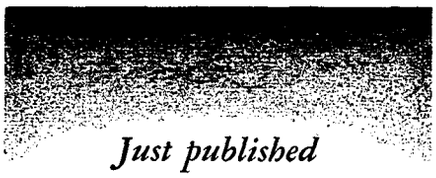
Records in Review

By EDWARD T. CANBY

A SIGNIFICANT cultural battle is going on these days between those who look upon old music in the light of the nineteenth-century evolutionary philosophy—the seekers of Origins, the Modernizers—and those who find in it simply the expression, great or petty, of other generations of human beings indistinguishable from our own, but for the accident of time. Five recent recordings show some of the ramifications of this fight. First, Weingartner's attempt to modernize Handel's 6th Concerto Grosso, in G minor (Col X-154: $3.50) by means of a large orchestra and a certain romantic softness of tone succeeds only in imparting a faintly antique quality to music which should be robust. This is not one of the more inspired concertos, and hence I recommend Boyd Neel's extraordinary recording of the 10th, 11th, and 12th concertos (Decca) as a substitute. At the opposite end of the scale is Carl Weinrich's second album of Bach organ works. (Musicraft No. 37: $5.) His "Praetorius" organ is a product of the ardent new movement towards performance of old music as originally conceived. Though many will miss the conventional grandeur of the usual organ, I find no fault with the recording except for the total lack of echo; the resulting clarity, while excellent for study, seems as supernatural as an infra-red photograph. Thirdly, the long-awaited Toscanini version of Mozart's G minor symphony is out (VM-631: $6.50). I cannot recommend it. That steel-cable tautness so characteristic of Toscanini, that almost hysterical singing of the strings, the loading of every phrase with almost more emotion that it can carry—all this is foreign to the deep and perfectly balanced dignity of Mozart's music. The Beecham version, or even the old Stock version, is preferable. Fourthly, a recording of Mendelssohn's Reformation Symphony, No. 5 (Col M-391: $6) shows us this composer in the role of modernizer. The attempt to clothe the spirit of Luther in full Romantic dress is not successful; "A Mighty Fortress is our God" is almost painfully out of place amid the rich orchestration, the over-ripe harmonies of the full-blown Mendelssohnian style. There are fine moments, however. Finally a collection of six English folk dances has been issued (Col M-394: $3.50) in arrangements for octet of strings and winds by Arnold Foster. The folk-dancing craze has spread rapidly, and one of its chief virtues has been the quintessential beauty, the stark individuality of the traditional English tunes. Cecil Sharpe, the pioneer collector, was a genius at harmonizing them in a way that brought out their essential qualities without introducing undue harmonic distraction. Mr. Foster, unfortunately, is not so gifted; he attempts to improve, to modernize. These arrangements must rank with Stokowski's Bach as prime examples of anachronistic lily-gilding.

A welcome release is a complete set of Debussy's Nocturnes for orchestra, "Fêtes," "Nuages," and "Sirènes" (VM-630: $6.50). The first two are well known, but the last is seldom heard, simply because the score includes a rather difficult part for wordless woman's chorus. Mr. Stokowski is usually at his best in this type of music, but here the performances are occasionally hurried; the (nameless) wordless chorus does not achieve the smooth legato it should, and is a bit unsure as to intonation. Since the recording is considerably better than previous versions, these difficulties should not count for much with most listeners.



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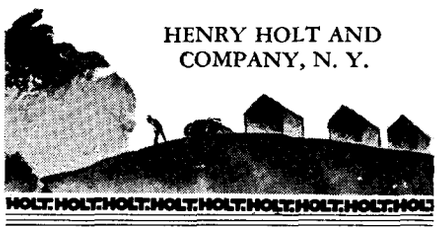

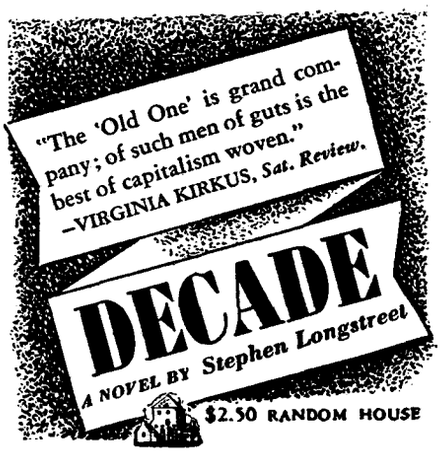
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—VIRGINIA KIRKUS, Sat. Review.
DECADE
A NOVEL BY Stephen Longstreet
$2.50 RANDOM HOUSE

Government by Prime Minister

MEN IN OUR TIME. By Audax. New York: Robert M. McBride & Co. 1940. 217 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by JAMES FREDERICK GREEN

IT is a truism of political science that in Great Britain during the past twenty-five years parliamentary government has generally meant cabinet government, or even government by prime minister. Although His Majesty's Ministers are supposed to be servants of Parliament, the reverse has more often been the case. For examples of the Prime Minister's predominance in the national life, you have only to recall Mr. MacDonald's formation of the National Government in 1931, Mr. Baldwin's maneuvers during the Abdication crisis, and Mr. Chamberlain's journey to Munich. This concentration of authority, in Britain as in other countries, is in part the result of larger events—two world wars and an economic depression. Modern government is so complex that Parliament has become more and more an organ for approving or disapproving policy, for criticizing and checking, and for expressing public opinion. In both the Conservative and Labor parties, moreover, there has been a marked centralization of authority.

Since a small group of men in the War Cabinet is now making decisions that affect the lives of millions of people both inside and outside the British Empire, information regarding Mr. Chamberlain and his colleagues is particularly welcome. In this entertaining volume, considerable light is thrown on their characters and careers by "Audax," described as a "man who sees the government of England from the inside." He succeeds in relating foreign affairs to party politics, and in describing each of nine statesmen with admirable frankness and by means of many delightful anecdotes. The author adds little to our knowledge of Mr. Chamberlain or Anthony Eden, whom he describes with respect but not exactly enthusiasm. Winston Churchill receives the approbation which he deserves, embellished with quotations from his public and private remarks. Sir John Simon is given the customary verdict of "brilliant but unattractive," and Sir Samuel Hoare is pictured as diligent, ambitious, and unlucky.

The most interesting chapters deal with the men who are less known on this side of the Atlantic—Lord Halifax, Duff Cooper, Leslie Hore-Belisha, and Sir Kingsley Wood. Audax believes that each of them, as well as Mr. Churchill, has a chance of succeeding Mr. Chamberlain, and shows considerable insight in sketching their individual merits and weaknesses. The sprightly text is enhanced by newspaper photographs, including the famous picture of Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Halifax crossing the Channel.

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The New Books

Belles-Lettres

ESSAYS AND ADDRESSES. By Oliver Elton. Longmans, Green. 1939. 275 *pp., with index.* $2.50.

No one need be deceived by the armchair attitude adopted in these occasional papers, for the author's work is as substantial as it is charming. Mr. Elton has long since proved himself in historical scholarship; and if he now chooses to deal less with points of fact than with lines of thought, he is merely demonstrating his belief that historical investigation, however important, must finally be ancillary to criticism. The present volume is a miscellany containing studies of Shakespeare's style, Byron's present reputation, Bridges's "The Testament of Beauty," three Slavonic writers (Pushkin, Chekhov, and Capek), "Reason and Enthusiasm," and the careers of George Saintsbury and James Fitzmaurice-Kelly. A valuable paper considers "The Nature of Literary Criticism." The critic, Mr. Elton believes, should not allow his thoughts to contract into a system whether based on a poetic tradition, a theory of esthetics, or ethical preferences. Rather his function is largely to interpret, and his chief value-test will be "internal." Much of the argument in this section steers toward the position of the impressionistic critic, but Mr. Elton manages (with the aid of a fallacy or two) to bail out just in time. For despite his "modern" outlook, he is temperamentally loyal to neoclassical rationalism. He tucks in a good word for the Augustans where he can, and he begs to be excused from more than the most meager praise of "enthusiasts" and all their ilk. Yet he escapes being narrowly partisan, and the present volume as a whole constitutes a useful harvest of ripened opinion.

A. C.

Fiction

SOLITAIRE. By Edwin Corle. Dutton. 1940. 351 *pp.* $2.50.

FAITH, HOPE AND A HORSE. By John Benton. Appleton-Century. 1940. 249 *pp.* $2.

Mr. Corle's picture of suburban life is accurate, lively, and ironic. Virginia, a little California girl, finds her first companion in Ben, a vagrant who lives just behind her house, at the bottom of an arroyo no deeper than the social chasm between them. Though her parents are superficially generous and kind, they never give her their full attention. With Ben and his pet rat, she builds up the friendship she needs; which is of course shattered the instant her parents hear of it.

Virginia's family set-up goes with almost every two-car, one-child house in Massachusetts as well as California. But the misunderstanding and neglect from which both Virginia and Ben suffer are not made important enough to carry a full-length novel.

As Mr. Corle pulls out the Steinbeck stop to dramatize the starved life of a child of well-to-do parents, so John Benton introduces social significance into his farce of the evangelist racket. Most forgotten men could be rehabilitated, he intimates, if people approached them in the spirit of his hero and heroine. Lila, a gospel teacher, who believes, and Edward, an ex-racing man who believes only in her, hitch their Star-of-Hope mission to a race horse and win. With the help of God and an 8-1 bet on Annabel Lee, they clean up the graft within the mission and the misery without.

Mr. Benton combines a good plot, a sense of humor, and a thorough knowledge of his subject with an ear for the niceties of American speech comparable only to that of the British novelist. His characters do the right thing in the right way, but they spoil a lot of their own effects by such transatlantic horrors as "His britches are full of ants." Nevertheless, "Faith, Hope and a Horse" is entertaining, especially when it shows how much money there is in sanctimony.

K. S.

NO BIRDS SING. By Leslie Edgley. Farrar & Rinehart. 1940. $2.50.

The bleak title of this first novel will not mislead the reader, for in its melancholy pages no children laugh, no marriage is happy, no flowers bloom (except at funerals), no job is secure, no one hopes, no birds sing; however,

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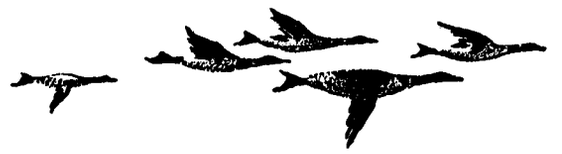

The Loon Feather

by Iola Fuller

Fur-trading days on Mackinac Island—deep woods of an Indian child's playground, where the "seas of sweet water" meet, where the French traders, the fishermen, and the red men lived in teeming proximity during the summer moons. This is the beautiful setting of Oneta's story—Oneta the daughter of a great chieftain, brought up by her French foster family, and bound, by her life and love, to the white man's world. It is an immensely rich and dramatic story, out of a little known chapter of our past, and it introduces a new talent of exquisite freshness.

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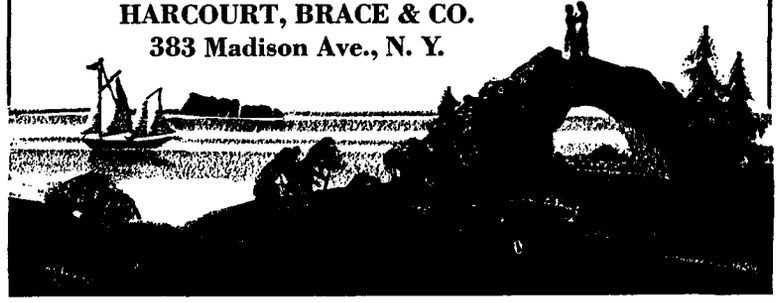

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the publisher's blurb on the jacket that it is not a novel of frustration is at least puzzling. Only on the very last page does the self-pitying, masochistic hero begin to shed his black despair, but after three hundred pages of captious skepticism and cynical aside the reader is hardly prepared for a miracle.

Like many another young man's novel, especially in America, it is concerned with a brief interlude in the twenty-fourth year of Nick Torrence's life. Back from Loyalist Spain with a shrapnel wound, he is disillusioned, misanthropic. His home town (a Calumet steel town in Indiana), his family—everything is repellent. An abortive love affair almost destroys him, but at the very end he recovers and proceeds to pastures new, where, one fears, no birds will sing. Again one must say "No Birds Sing" is a powerful and readable book, an almost horrifying study of frustration.

The author—a young English-born Chicago radio writer—has, like Hemingway, a sure command of the authentic locutions and rhythms of everyday speech. The dialogue is excellent. However, a fondness for fierce metaphor and simile sometimes leads him to the ludicrous. "The rubbery lips of old women, like the vibratory gills of gray catfish, shivered silently in prayer." "The chinless, pimply youths made way, their eyes touching Elena like gray clots of spittle." It would be quite unfair to describe Edgley's style as anemic. In his next book, which we will certainly read, let us hope for a little warmth in his humor, and at least one bird to sing. He is a novelist to watch.

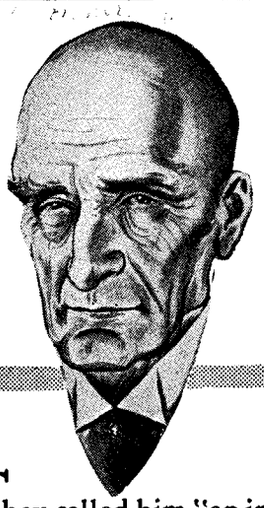
R. A. C.

Miscellaneous

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF AN EGRET. By E. A. McIlhenny. Hastings House. 1940. 58 *pp.* $2.

E. A. McIlhenny is known to all American conservationists for his noble work in saving the snowy egret from extinction and, through the protection he has accorded it on Avery Island, Louisiana, restoring it to its proper place in our avifauna. By his years of devotion and experience he is uniquely qualified to speak for the bird, and that is what he has done now in this slender volume of fifty-eight pages. The life-history of the species is recounted in the form of an Alice-Toklas "autobiography," Mr. Egret being the narrator. The information is all there and cannot be questioned. But the method of presentation is another matter, since it necessarily involves grafting a human psyche onto the bird to replace its own, thereby making it a little man in feathers rather than the authentic *Egretta thula*. The consequences of seriously trying to explain the egret's proper life-history in terms of its improper human psychology are, as with all such attempts, just plain unfortunate. The real value of the book is in its abundance of illustrations from photographs of the Avery Island colony.

L. J. H., Jr.



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Title and Author	*Crime, Place and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
ROAD TO FOLLY *Leslie Ford* (Scribners: $2.)	Predatory Nawthen wench sticks neck into complex of Charleston family loyalties, gets it choked. Local sleuthing.	Mystery neatly handled, but subordinated to deft characterizations, and to low-country atmosphere thick as gumbo.	Recommended
AND THEN THERE WERE NONE *Agatha Christie* (Dodd Mead: $2.)	Ten men and women, all with besmirched pasts, spend week-end on island off Devon coast. One by one they die.	Hair-raising and completely inexplicable build-up not matched by rather fantastic explanation—but most readers won't mind that.	Spectacular
ENTER THREE WITCHES *Paul McGuire* (Morrow: $2.)	Writer slain in Spain turns up alive at Italian villa; strange events culminate in murder. English journalist investigates.	Atmosphere and writing pretty nearly perfect. Sleuthing incidental, but romance, thrills, and mystery blend to queen's taste.	Bravissimo!
FOOTSTEPS IN THE AIR *Susan Wells* (Simon & Schuster: $2.)	Isolated Cal. rancho with tragic history scene of two murders solved, minus police help, by Tony Ware.	Super-sinister atmosphere a little cloying at times, but people and sleuthing are capitally done.	Very good
THE LAVA FLOW MURDERS *Max Long* (Lippincott: $2.)	Double murderer perpetrates foul deeds behind screen of Hawaiian volcano eruption, but Komako, island sleuth, isn't hindered by such trifles.	Native superstitions, white antipathies, awe-inspiring effects of lava stream, and capable detecting combine to make unusually vivid yarn.	Effective
THE CRIMINAL C.O.D. *Phoebe Atwood Taylor* (Norton: $2.)	Aspiring Cape Cod politician and secretary-sweetheart oddly slain. Enter Asey Mayo—and cousin Syl. . . .	Gets under way rather slowly but the rest is well up to amusing and mysterious Mayo specifications.	Entertaining

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Trade Winds

BY P. E. G. QUERCUS

OLD Q's most absorbing reading this week was in the Livre Jaune issued this winter by the French ministry of Foreign Affairs. It reprints the French diplomatic documents of 1938-39, from the Munich pact until the outbreak of war. It can be obtained, presumably, by any dealer in French books; if we were a history teacher setting an exam we would give our students as sight translation the description of Hitler's mountain eyrie written by M. François-Poncet (then French ambassador in Berlin) after his visit in October, 1938. ☞This is one of the most curious documents of our time; we wonder whether it will be paralleled by a similar passage in the forthcoming and eagerly awaited memoir by Sir Neville Henderson. ☞The only comparable eagle's nest in the publishing business is the new glass-house of Essandess in Rockefeller Center. ☞Mr. P. M. Stone (Waltham, Mass.) sends a photo taken many years ago of the house in Waltham where George Gissing lived in 1877. The house is still standing, but no one has ever cleared up the allusion that Mr. Stone discovered in an old Waltham newspaper—to the effect that young Gissing (he was then only 20) left Waltham suddenly "in a distracted state of mind."

☞The annual Rosenbach Lectures at the University of Pennsylvania are being given this year by Dr. George Parker Winship. ☞An irreverent correspondent — perhaps an ill-humored Democrat—writes to say that the G. O. P. has probably chosen to hold its convention in Philadelphia in the hope of meeting Miss K. Foyle. ☞An interesting announcement from Sheed & Ward is *Radio Reporter in Jerusalem* ($1.50) which is described as "the scenes of Holy Week miraculously broadcast by a modern reporter." ☞The same publisher offers *Preface to Metaphysics* ($1.75), a translation of Maritain's *Sept Leçons sur L'Etre.* ☞New York University, at its Washington Square Center, is holding an exhibition illustrating high spots in the long struggle for freedom of the press. The items are from the collection of Dean Sommer of the N. Y. U. School of Law.

Cedric G. Chase

George Gissing's lodgings at Waltham, Mass., in 1877.

☞The first united festival of the Women's National Book Association and the N. Y. Booksellers's League was held, at the dinner table and on the dance floor, in the Hotel Pennsylvania, February 16. Carl Carmer presented the Constance Lindsay Skinner medal to Miss Anne Carroll Moore. ☞The Booksellers' Leaguers proved to be dancers with plenty of jive, and it is hoped that this gracious Leap Year gesture of the W. N. B. A. will become an annual wayzgoose.

☞We were sorry to hear from Elmer Adler that *The Colophon,* after 9 lively volumes, is to suspend. It has been a handsome forum for collectors' pleasures and we hope it may some day be revived—perhaps in less costly form. ☞Among other interesting Firsts, Richard Burleigh (Marquette Bldg., Chicago) offers for $90 the first-off-the-press copy of the first edition of Emerson Hough's first book, *The Singing Mouse Stories* (1895). It was signed by the author for his father. ☞Another unusual Americana item listed by Burleigh is an immaculate first of Riley's *Old Swimmin'-Hole,* Indianapolis, 1883 ($250). ☞An odd little souvenir catalogued by Dawson's, 627 South Grand Ave., Los Angeles, is the stub of a ticket to the Regents Park Zoo, signed by Rudyard Kipling (who was one of the Fellows of the Zoological Society). This pleases us because we once visited that same Zoo with Mr. Kipling, and remember watching him sign his name (very small and clear) in the Visitors' Book.

☞We are pleased to see more booksellers carrying Penguin Books. We left a copy of one of their little anthologies of modern poetry lying around the house, just to see if anyone would notice, and the younger generation (whose taste is generally pretty good) spotted it at once. If

(*Continued on next page*)

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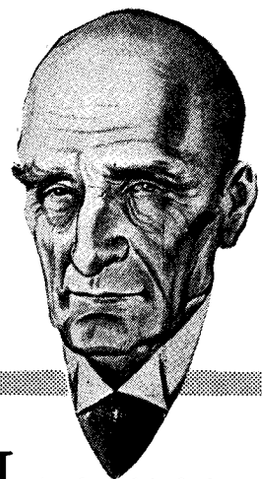
Trade Winds

(*Continued from preceding page*)

your bookseller doesn't carry Penguins, write to 41 East 28. ☞W. S. Hall, of Snyder and Hall, the farthest ranging book salesmen, plans to leave about March 1st to sell U. S. books in Chile, Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia and Venezuela. ☞Mr. Hall remarks, with justice, that he is continually amazed at North American publishers' vagueness about geography.

☞The Mistletoe Bookshop in Albany tells us that the latest parlor game in the Patroon City is drawing up lists of what Ten Women in Fiction one would take with one to a desert island. ☞The Gotham Book Mart girls say nothing in their experience pulls like Joe Jackson's radio broadcasts in San Francisco. Joe spoke very warmly of Gotham's sprightly catalogue *We Moderns* and the shop has been swamped with requests.

☞Those who have more books than needed would be interested in a letter we saw written to Frances Steloff of the Gotham Book Mart thanking her for two boxes of good reading donated to the Will Rogers Memorial Hospital at Saranac Lake. It was signed by 45 patients, who said "We should like her to know how she has brightened the hours of a long and tedious malady." ☞The Charles E. Tuttle Company of Rutland, Vermont, please Old Q. by telling him that an allusion in this column brought an order by telegraph for their first edition copy of *Walden*. ☞Richard Wright, author of *Native Son* (the first novel by a Negro writer to be chosen as Book of the Month) will speak at the 135th Street branch of the N. Y. Public Library, the evening of March 7th. ☞In re the highly coveted Houghton Mifflin Literary Fellowships, the publishers ask us to note that the honorarium has been increased this year to $1500 for each of the two fellowships, and the closing date postponed from April 1 to September 15. Full information from H. M. Co., 2 Park Street, Boston.



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FICTION AT THE CROSSROADS: (Continuing the Famous Session on the Novel at the Writers' Congress.) Speakers: Benjamin Appel, Dorothy Brewster, Oliver La Farge, Ruth McKenney, William Rollins, Jr., Edwin Seaver, Dorothy Thomas, F. C. Weiskopf, Richard Wright. Friday, March 1, 8:30 P.M. Newspaper Guild Club, 117 West 46 Street. Admission 35c. Auspices: League of American Writers, 381 Fourth Avenue.

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In the Spring number will appear the symposium: THE LEGACY OF SIGMUND FREUD: I, Clinical; II, Literary and Aesthetic; III, Philosophical.

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		1-F	2-M		3-X	4-C	5-S	6-E	7-K	8-V	9-Q		10-O	11-D	12-F	13-H	
14-E	15-B	16-A		17-Y	18-N	19-H	20-S	21-E	22-K		23-T	24-B	25-J	26-I		27-B	28-J
29-E	30-Y	31-I	32-K		33-Y	34-T	35-Q	36-W	37-C	38-P		39-I	40-G		41-Y	42-G	43-Q
44-B		45-J	46-F		47-T	48-A	49-F	50-I		51-S	52-A	53-U	54-R	55-N	56-F	57-W	
58-P	59-F	60-D	61-R		62-M	63-G	64-D		65-A	66-J		67-J	68-T	69-Y	70-W	71-O	72-H
73-S	74-G		75-Q	76-K	77-E	78-V	79-I	80-U	81-O		82-A	83-G	84-J		85-V	86-D	87-X
88-P	89-A	90-O		91-K	92-F	93-Q	94-L	95-D		96-O	97-C	98-H	99-W	100-K	101-P	102-R	103-L
	104-W	105-I	106-C	107-E	108-H	109-R	110-V		111-I	112-L	113-T	114-C	115-O	116-H	117-N		118-B
119-J	120-G		121-X	122-F	123-T	124-E	125-M		126-G	127-F	128-C	129-Q		130-X	131-M	132-V	133-J
134-F		135-M	136-D	137-W	138-R	139-G	140-O		141-T	142-U	143-S	144-N	145-L	146-V	147-M	148-Y	149-X
	150-Q	151-W	152-P	153-I	154-H	155-J		156-S	157-M	158-Q		159-J	160-A	161-H		162-K	163-W
164-R	165-C	166-U	167-Y	168-N	169-F	170-T	171-P	172-O		173-T	174-U	175-L	176-P	177-E	178-S	179-I	180-Q
	181-G	182-C		183-Q	184-P	185-A		186-K	187-Y	188-L	189-V						

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-five words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (1938 edition).

The solution of last week's *Double Crostic* will be found on page 16 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. Exclamation of Xenophon's soldiers.

B. One who has made pilgrimage.

C. Confronts impudently.

D. Part.

E. Without fail (slang) (2 wds.)

F. Good breeding (Fr.) (comp.)

G. Profane.

H. Villain of "A Christmas Carol" (first name).

I. Repayment, recompense.

J. Not partitioned.

K. Moments.

L. American novelist (1880-).

M. Partnership, collusion (slang).

N. Elijah (N. T.)

O. Jaundiced.

P. Rising aloft.

Q. Assuming intellectual superiority (comp.) (slang).

R. Old Testament heroine.

S. Despicable; a wretch.

T. Second mowing.

U. Composer of the "Enigma Variations."

V. Trick; nimbleness.

W. Evaluated.

X. Origins.

Y. Author of "Wallenstein."

WORDS

A.	82	160	65	89	48	16	185	52		
B.	24	118	44	27	15					
C.	97	106	128	182	37	114	4	165		
D.	64	136	86	11	60	95				
E.	107	29	124	177	6	77	14	21		
F.	1	169	49	46	127	134	92	59	122	12	56
G.	120	63	40	83	42	74	139	181	126		
H.	161	19	154	72	13	98	116	108			
I.	105	31	39	153	26	79	179	111	50		
J.	28	119	66	84	67	159	25	45	133	155	
K.	91	7	22	162	76	100	186	32			
L.	188	175	145	94	112	103					
M.	135	147	62	2	157	131	125				
N.	144	168	55	18	117						
O.	140	81	96	115	71	10	90	172			
P.	88	176	58	171	38	184	152	101			
Q.	129	43	180	183	75	158	93	150	35	9	
R.	102	164	138	61	109	54					
S.	51	73	20	143	178	5	156				
T.	123	173	23	68	113	141	34	170	47		
U.	166	174	80	142	53						
V.	110	85	8	146	78	132	189				
W.	151	104	36	99	70	137	163	57			
X.	3	121	130	87	149						
Y.	41	33	17	30	167	148	187	69			

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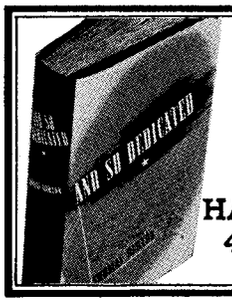

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